DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 413 381 UD 031 969

AUTHOR	Ferguson, Ronald F.; Clay, Philip L.; Snipes, Jason C.; Roaf, Phoebe
TITLE	YouthBuild in Developmental Perspective. A Formative Evaluation of the YouthBuild Demonstration Project.
INSTITUTION	Massachusetts Inst. of Tech., Cambridge. Dept. of Urban Studies and Planning.
PUB DATE	1996-09-00
NOTE	440p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Department of Urban Studies and Planning, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA 02138 ($30 prepaid; 10 or more copies, $15 each).
PUB TYPE	Reports - Evaluative (142)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC18 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Adolescents; *Building Trades; Demonstration Programs; *Disadvantaged Youth; Dropouts; Formative Evaluation; *High School Equivalency Programs; *Job Training; Minority Groups; Models; Program Evaluation; Urban Youth; Youth Programs
IDENTIFIERS	Research Replication

ABSTRACT

This report is a formative evaluation of the YouthBuild Demonstration Project that began in 1991 and ended in 1994. The YouthBuild Model, developed in earlier programs, was directed at young people who were largely disconnected from schools and jobs. Major components of the project were counseling, academic remediation with preparation for the General Equivalency Diploma (GED), leadership development, and training in construction skills. Five sites participated in the demonstration: (1) Boston (Massachusetts); (2) Cleveland (Ohio); (3) Gary (Indiana); (4) San Francisco (California); and (5) Tallahassee (Florida). Each was studied for two full cycles of the program. These sites served 16-to-24-year-olds, most of whom were male high school dropouts, minority, unemployed, and living in high risk neighborhoods. During the second observed cycle, there were 177 participants from all the sites. Seventeen percent dropped out, but 22% earned GEDs. Comparison with other nationally known youth programs showed that YouthBuild surpassed all but one of these programs for average length of stay and had the highest GED completion rate. Evaluation suggested that the training youth received was sufficient to prepare job-ready laborers, but not semi-skilled construction workers. The evaluation finds that only one site, in its second cycle, achieved nearly exemplary standards in its adherence to the YouthBuild model. The model itself was evaluated as viable and replicable, and, in fact, was replicated in 100 programs. (Contains 21 figures and 37 tables.) (SLD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 413 381

YOUTHBUILD IN DEVELOPMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

A Formative Evaluation
of the YouthBuild Demonstration Project

by

Ronald F. Ferguson
Malcolm Wiener Center for Social Policy
John F. Kennedy School of Government
Harvard University

and

Philip L. Clay
Department of Urban Studies and Planning
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

with

Jason C. Snipes
John F. Kennedy School of Government
Malcolm Wiener Center for Social Policy
Harvard University

and

Phoebe Roaf
Public/Private Ventures

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)
☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND
DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL
HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Phillip Clay
M.I.T
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

September 1996

UD 031964

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

YOUTHBUILD IN DEVELOPMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

A Formative Evaluation of the YouthBuild Demonstration Project

by

Ronald F. Ferguson
Malcolm Wiener Center for Social Policy
John F. Kennedy School of Government
Harvard University

and

Philip L. Clay
Department of Urban Studies and Planning
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

with

Jason C. Snipes
John F. Kennedy School of Government
Malcolm Wiener Center for Social Policy
Harvard University

and

Phoebe Roaf
Public/Private Ventures

September 1996

Copies of this report will be distributed free of charge through 1996. Thereafter, copies are available for $20.00 *prepaid* by check or money order. Each copy in a single order is $15.00 if 10 or more copies are ordered. All order must be prepaid Mail request to:

Department of Urban Studies and Planning
ATTN.: Prof. P. L. Clay
7-338
MIT
Cambridge, Mass. 02138
Fax (617) 253-8312

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements i
Executive Summary ii

Part I: Introduction

1. Introduction 1

2. Enrollments, Outcomes and External Comparisons 9
(by P. Roaf)

Part II: The Local Organization and Construction
(by P. Clay)

3. Development of the Demonstration Sites 31

4. The Construction Training Component 80

Part III: Predicting Program Performance
(by R. Ferguson)

5. Introduction to the Analysis of Youth Development 131

6. Early Social Engagement: Relationships and Absenteeism 155
    Appendix 6: Details of Multivariate Estimates 173

7. Determinants of Positive Terminations and GED Completions 182
    Appendix 7A: Multivariate Methodology and Technical Discussion . . . 210
    Appendix 7B: Out-of-Sample Predictions for Positive Terminations . . . 222

8. Simulations for Judging Program Performance and Setting Targets 225

Part IV: The Process of Youth Transformation

9. Developmental Tasks and Stages in the YouthBuild Experience 245
(by R. Ferguson and J. Snipes)

10. Quantitative Evidence on Engagement and Youth Transformation 319
(by R. Ferguson)
    Appendix 10A: The Data 346
    Appendix 10B: Correlates of Development 352
    Appendix 10C: Answers to End-of-Program Questionnaire 361

Part V: Summary, Lessons and Conclusions

11. Summary, Lessons and Conclusions 369

12. Guest Epilogue 402
(by Dorothy Stoneman, President, YouthBuild USA)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report reflects the efforts of a large number of people. Most prominently, we acknowledge Dorothy Stoneman of YouthBuild USA, who several years ago went to the Ford Foundation with a proposal for a demonstration project for a program called YouthBuild. Karen Fulbright-Anderson, who at the time was a program officer at Ford, was inspired by the idea, but insisted that the project should have an independent evaluation. Eventually, Andrew Fisher of the DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund, John Blyth of the Mott Foundation and Willis Bright of the Lilly Endowment brought the resources of their institutions along to help support the project. For continually encouraging us to stop tinkering and to finish the project, we thank Inca Mohamed of the Ford Foundation, Jennifer Philips of Mott, Andrew Fisher and Jane Quinn of DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest. We gratefully acknowledge all of these program officers and the institutions that they represented.

We also thank the many people in the demonstration cities who tolerated our endless interviews. The executive directors of the demonstration sites not only tolerated our interviews, they directed their staffs and trainees to do the same. They gave us access to their boards, their local funders and others in their local communities. As well, they spent hours in meetings discussing what the evaluation should try to do and the ways that it might be most useful to the field. Hence, special thanks go to David Burch of Cleveland, Jackie Gelb of Boston, Al Rutherford of Gary, Tom Fisher and Curtis Corbin of Tallahassee, and Richard Henry of San Francisco.

Thanks go to Gary Walker and Michael Bailin of Public/Private Ventures, who participated in the early discussions about the project and committed Public/Private Ventures to manage the collection of basic base-line data and monthly data on attendance, terminations and achievements. Walker also committed Phoebe Roaf to the project to contribute what appears here as chapter 2 of the report. We thank Pheobe and all of the others at P/PV who helped to make the project work.

At YouthBuild USA we want to thank not only Dorothy Stoneman but also John Bell, Curdina Hill and Kevin Tarpley. Each was generous with their time and more than patient with our questioning. All did everything that they could to help us with access to information.

Special recognition should go to Paul Aaron who, along with Jason Snipes, did a large number of the interviews upon which sections of this report are based. Alex Walters, Rachel Baker and Denis Udall gave valuable assistance early in the project. Michael Blackmore helped with production. Finally, we owe a dept of gratitude to Marcia Ellison, who transcribed too many interviews to count and became as much an authority on YouthBuild as we.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
REPORT ON THE YOUTHBUILD DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

This report is a formative evaluation of the YouthBuild Demonstration Project that began in 1991 and ended in 1994.[1] YouthBuild USA, of Somerville, Massachusetts, designed, organized and managed the demonstration project. In this capacity, it served a host of fund raising, technical assistance, training and advisory functions. An independent team of researchers conducted the evaluation. Ronald F. Ferguson of the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard and Phillip L. Clay of the Department of Urban Studies and Planning at MIT coauthored the report. Phoebe Roaf of Public/Private Ventures in Philadelphia wrote chapter 2 and Jason C. Snipes of Harvard coauthored chapter 9. Dorothy Stoneman of YouthBuild USA contributed chapter 12, the epilogue. In addition, Public/Private Ventures performed important information management functions. Paul Aaron of Brandeis University conducted many of the interviews. (See chapter 11, "Summary, Lessons and Conclusions," for a complete overview of this report.)

Five sites participated in the demonstration, each for two full cycles of the program. A typical cycle lasted 9 to 11 months. During the period of the demonstration, selected trainees from each of the sites traveled to Washington DC and visited members of congress. Under the leadership of YouthBuild USA, participants recounted their personal experiences in YouthBuild and argued that YouthBuild should become a federally sponsored program. Their presentations were instrumental in helping YouthBuild USA to secure federal funding. With support from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, YouthBuild has now expanded to 100 programs, 90 with HUD funding, in 34 states. The present report is not an evaluation of the sites that HUD has funded. Hence, readers should not assume that any descriptive generalizations in the report apply to the HUD sites. However, most of the issues that the report addresses are issues that all YouthBuild sites, including HUD sites, must confront. All YouthBuild sites should find much in the report that is useful.

The five sites of the demonstration were Boston, MA; Cleveland, OH; Gary, IN; San Francisco, CA; and Tallahassee, FL. The program in Gary was sponsored by a community development corporation that was itself sponsored by a church; Cleveland's program was sponsored by a social service agency that was sponsored by local trade unions; the program in Tallahassee was sponsored by a small organization that specialized in renovating housing. Organizers in Boston and San Francisco decided to create new free-standing YouthBuild organizations, rather than become embedded in existing ones. Boston began a year early and completed a full cycle of the program before the demonstration project began. However, for the other four sites, the first year of the demonstration was their first year of YouthBuild.

Each site was responsible for raising its operating support from local funders. In addition, each received a modest stipend to cover the administrative cost of participating in research component of the demonstration.

---

[1] Formative evaluations aim primarily to discover details of how programs operate and to contribute to the improvement of program design and implementation. Formative evaluations are not primarily concerned with calculating costs and social costs and benefits, nor do they compare participants' outcomes with what would have happened for participants if they had not participated in the program. The latter is more the role of summative evaluation. Generally, summative evaluation is more appropriate after formative evaluation has lead to fine tuning of program performance.

I. ENROLLMENTS, OUTCOMES AND EXTERNAL COMPARISONS (P. Roaf)

Sites served 16-to 24-year-olds, most of whom were male high school dropouts, minority, unemployed and living in high risk neighborhoods. **More than half (65% in year two, 49% in year one) reported some prior involvement in the criminal justice system**.

Results for the two cycles of the demonstration were quite similar. The text of this report focuses on the second. During that cycle, 177 trainees participated. Of these, **seventeen percent left the program for reasons that are difficult to classify as successes or failures of the program. These included death, poor health and the relocation of families. Of those who remained, sixty-nine percent achieved positive terminations**. Positive termination means that the trainee finished the program cycle or left with the blessing of the program to go into a job or to school. Negative termination means that the trainee was expelled or quit without moving into a job or a school setting that the program approved. The program emphasized attendance and poor attendance was a common reason for expulsion. **The average rate of attendance was eighty-five percent**. Twenty percent of high school dropouts earned their General Equivalency Diplomas (GEDs) before leaving the program. Others who made progress toward the GED may have completed it after the program ended, but this project did not track participants after they left.

Chapter 2 identifies five nationally known programs that have undergone evaluation and serve the same general population that YouthBuild serves. **The YouthBuild demonstration project surpassed all but one of the others for average length of stay and had the highest completion rate for the GED**.[2] The data show that compared to the other programs, YouthBuild serves a much higher than average share of minority males. Generally, evaluations show that young minority males are a difficult population to serve. Hence, YouthBuild compares well with other programs in the rates of retention and GED completion that it achieves, particularly for minority males.

II. THE LOCAL ORGANIZATION AND CONSTRUCTION (P. Clay)

Drawing on interviews with participants, members of the staff and others in each city, the study recounts basic features of the story for each local YouthBuild organization. The report emphasizes causes and consequences of variation across sites in general practices and organizational development. Among several issues that the report considers, **funding plentiful and flexible enough to permit spending for all of YouthBuild's core components seemed critical. Shortages of flexible funding at some sites caused them to deviate at times from ideal ways of implementing the program. In addition, competent and committed leadership to use that funding was a *sine qua non*.** Counseling and construction training were the aspects of the program most likely to be under-staffed or under-equipped.

The study examines the quality and features of the construction training that youth received and proposes refinements. **Most training that demonstration sites provided was**

---

[2] We compare length of stay and GED completion only because these are two indices that are easily comparable across programs. They are not necessarily the two most important goals of any of the programs.

sufficient to prepare job-ready laborers, but not to prepare semi-skilled construction workers or workers ready for apprenticeship. Also, balancing the training needs of participants with the production demands of construction projects sometimes operated to the disadvantage of the training mission and shortchanged students.

At least two sites had staff with insufficient experience in managing construction projects. This contributed to difficulties in finding appropriate projects, arranging project and contracts and achieving timely completion. In the future, when the appropriate expertise is not available on the staff, **it may be advisable for YouthBuild programs to borrow the project management capability of other community-based organizations or to hire consultants to handle these responsibilities.**

III. PREDICTING PROGRAM PERFORMANCE (R. Ferguson)

Statistical analyses in the report consider determinants of staff-youth relationships, attendance patterns, rates of positive termination and GED completion. Important characteristics of participants include their skills, goals, life styles and attitudes about success. **The most important characteristics for predicting positive terminations are age, schooling and various aspects of conventionality in life style.** In addition, good staff-youth relationships and attendance from the first few months of the program are somewhat predictable using base-line life styles and attitudes, and are themselves predictors of positive termination. **The most important factors for predicting completion of the GED are the priority of GED completion and construction training as goals (i.e., as reasons for joining YouthBuild) and the participant's belief in the efficacy of knowledge and effort, as opposed to chance, in determining lifetime earnings.**

Statistical simulations in the report show what the positive termination and GED completion rates might have been under various assumptions about trainees' characteristics and the quality of program implementation. **Simulations such as these can have value for sites as they consider alternative selection standards for trainees and associated performance targets. Similarly, they can be useful to funders and to others who need to compare the performance of sites that may be dissimilar in the difficulty of the populations that they serve.**

Contrasted with measures that are not adjusted for trainees' characteristics, measures that are adjusted for such characteristics often produce a substantially different impression regarding which site was the better performer. **Our best estimates suggest that differences in performance among the sites in the demonstration were due in roughly equal measure to differences in the participants that they served and differences in the quality of program implementation. These findings offer a strong caution against using measures of performance to compare sites, if those measures are not adjusted to compensate for differences among the sites in the characteristics of participants.**

IV. THE PROCESS OF YOUTH TRANSFORMATION (R. Ferguson with J. Snipes)

The report identifies five developmental tasks and associated stages of development through which youth must pass in order to make the most of the YouthBuild experience:[3]

1. ***Trust versus Mistrust***. Learn to trust in the caring, competence, resourcefulness and fairness of YouthBuild staff and in the physical and emotional safety of the program environment among peers.

2. ***Autonomy versus Shame and Doubt***. Negotiate an acceptable range of autonomy in behavior and decision making, learning to respect the program's rules and to value guidance.

3. ***Initiative versus Guilt***. Initiate an honest attempt to collaborate with staff and peers toward self development, learning to cope with or to overcome any survivor's guilt and feelings of rejection by, or isolation from, the old peer group.

4. ***Industry versus Inferiority***. Strive industriously to learn new strategies for living and to master new skills, including skills for employability and skills required for the General Equivalency Diploma, high school diploma or college entrance exams.

5. ***Identity versus Identity Confusion***. Resolve any tensions between old and new beliefs about one's self. Assimilate a focused and positive identity that fosters a healthy life style, internal satisfaction with one's self and a sense of positive expectancy about one's future.

Chapter 9 addresses these tasks in detail. The report combines theory about youth development and quotations from interviews to illustrate why the demonstration sites helped some youth to achieve personal development, while others fell by the wayside. **Both the theory and the evidence suggest that good social relations between trainees and staff are necessary but not sufficient to produce success (e.g., changes from the base line to the end of the program in measures of time management, leadership proclivity, caring for children, ethical behavior and completion of the GED). What appears to be required in addition to *liking* the staff (social engagement), is that the participant should be *using* the staff (developmental engagement) for his or her personal development**. The statistical evidence for this proposition is in chapter 10. Chapter 9 shows sources of success and failure in the process by which participants move (or do not move) from social to developmental engagement. Lessons from this part of the evaluation have already been incorporated into training documents for YouthBuild staff.

V. LESSONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The YouthBuild model has several key components and a number of "qualities." The major components are counseling, academic remediation with preparation for the General Equivalency Diploma (GED), leadership development and training in construction skills. The qualities that YouthBuild USA emphasizes most are respect for young people and a positive peer group. Each of these major components and qualities operates in tandem with the others and appears to be critically important to the success of the program. While this report addresses many difficulties of implementation that the demonstration sites experienced, we conclude that the YouthBuild model is replicable and appears to be most effective when sites are most faithful to the philosophy and substance of the core YouthBuild model.

---

[3] The categories here are adapted from the work of Erik Erikson. See chapter 9 of this report.

Several conditions seemed especially important in distinguishing the most from the least successful sites. The strongest sites succeeded and the weakest failed much of the time on all eight of the following:

- strong commitment to maintaining fidelity to the YouthBuild model;
- executive leadership sufficiently qualified and devoted to perform all of the core duties required, including both internal management and fund raising;
- sufficient time between program cycles to allow for necessary planning;
- a suitable construction site for training YouthBuild participants;
- freedom from inappropriate constraints or meddling associated with being embedded in a financially weak host organization or one that does not share YouthBuild's culture or mission;
- adequate funding that is sufficiently flexible to cover staffing and materials for all aspects of the YouthBuild model;
- recruitment, screening and selection criteria and methods that produce a cohort of participants who truly want what the program has to offer and who seem determined to break away from any influences that might in the past have held them back or led them into trouble.
- directors and staff who are more than concerned and friendly; who, in addition to being likeable and emotionally supportive, are also steadfast in their insistence that youth should make the most of what YouthBuild has to offer. These are directors and staff who work steadily and competently to lead youth into developmental engagement toward personal growth, and not merely social engagement for an enjoyable experience.

In our judgment, based largely on what we learned from site visits and several hundred interviews, only Boston's second year of the demonstration achieved near exemplary implementation standards in its fidelity to the YouthBuild model. In addition, while each had weaknesses, the first years in Boston, Gary, and San Francisco achieved standards that were good. The second cycle in Gary and San Francisco and both cycles in Cleveland were plagued by difficulty with funders and funding restrictions. Finally, both cycles in Tallahassee suffered from poor management.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE REPORT

BACKGROUND

In late 1988 and early 1989, Dorothy Stoneman approached several national foundations seeking support for a demonstration project. The project would be to demonstrate the replicability of a program that Stoneman and others developed in New York City during the 1980s. In New York, the program operated at two sites. These sites, called the Youth Action Program and Banana Kelly, attracted adolescents and young adults who were mostly disconnected from schools and jobs. Organized by Stoneman and others, these young people lobbied the city council for money to support the fledgling program. Their claim was that through this program they would develop both themselves and their communities. The program rehabilitated abandoned buildings, taught leadership and public speaking skills, helped youth to earn their General Equivalency Diplomas and provided both formal and informal counseling.

Stoneman regarded the program as integral to the process of community development for low-income neighborhoods. Foundations agreed to support the demonstration project on the condition that it be accompanied by an external and independent evaluation. The main purpose of the evaluation was not a cost-benefit analysis or to develop rigorous estimates of net impacts. Either of these would have required a randomized control group, post-program follow-up of participants and much greater expense. Instead, it was agreed that the primary purpose of the evaluation should be to learn about the process of implementation outside of New York City -- to compile information and lessons that might be useful in the future. This is that evaluation.

The demonstration project served young people at sites in five cities through two full cycles of the program. The typical cycle ran from 9 to 11 months. The demonstration began in Boston, San Francisco, Cleveland and Tallahassee in the summer and fall of 1991. Other than Boston, which had operated for one cycle before the demonstration began, each was a new site for the program. The program in Gary started operation a year later than the others and finished its second cycle in the summer of 1994.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of a *formative* evaluation is to inform refinements to program models and implementation practices. Conversely, most *summative* evaluations provide assessments of net impacts and cost effectiveness, typically using randomly assigned control groups to show what participants might have achieved "but for" their participation. If youth who receive services from a program do better or worse than members of a control group, or if some participants last longer or achieve more in the program than others, a study that is purely summative reports the outcomes but offers little insight concerning explanations. In effect, the purely summative study treats the program as a "black box," producing little if any of the knowledge needed to improve the program or to replicate it reliably in the future.

This study aims to be primarily a formative evaluation. Its purpose is to inform refinements in the design and implementation of the YouthBuild program. It should be useful as well to programs other than YouthBuild that serve adolescents and young adults who are similar to those that YouthBuild targets. In addition, the study should be useful to officials in philanthropies and government who seek to understand why some youth and some sites of the YouthBuild program achieve more impressive results than others.

THE EVALUATION TEAM

Philip Clay of the Massachusetts Institute Technology had primary responsibility for understanding the development of local YouthBuild organizations and for evaluating the construction training component of the program. Ronald Ferguson of the Kennedy School at Harvard University had primary responsibility for understanding the process of youth development and predictors of the various measured outcomes. Gary Walker, Phoebe Roaf and their team at Public/Private Ventures in Philadelphia had primary responsibility for collecting base-line data on trainees' backgrounds, monthly data on attendance, achievement and terminations and for summarizing that data for this report. The P/PV team was also responsible for comparing YouthBuild with programs that serve similar populations.

The evaluation team communicated regularly with YouthBuild USA during the period of the evaluation, but operated independently. The content of this report is the prerogative and responsibility of the evaluation team, not YouthBuild USA or the funders.

METHODOLOGY

The combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis in this study produces a rich understanding of ways that both organizations and YouthBuild participants developed over the course of the demonstration, and why.

The qualitative analysis relies on information gathered during site visits and, occasionally, by telephone. We visited each site at least four times during each cycle. Three visits were to interview people inside the program about implementation issues and the evolving process of youth development. At least one visit was focused on logistics of the construction component of the program, on organizational development and on ties to the local community. Hence, in addition to the director and members of the staff, this visit interviewed local funders and others in the external environment.

Site visits that focused on the relationship between implementation practices and youth development included interviews with the director or program manager, several members of the staff and a cross-section of program participants. Typically such site visits lasted from three to five days. The visits resulted in several hundred face-to-face interviews, 200 of which were tape recorded, transcribed and coded for content. The usual interview with a director, a member of the staff or a trainee lasted from 60 to 90 minutes and covered multiple aspects of the respondent's experience in YouthBuild, including conditions outside the program that affected the YouthBuild experience.

Data for the quantitative analysis come from five surveys that were developed specifically for this project. They include two separate base-line surveys for participants, an opinion survey that participants completed at the fourth and eighth months, a survey of staff-youth relationships that staff members were asked to complete once each month, and an end-of-program survey completed by YouthBuild graduates in the last week of the second cycle of the program at three of the five sites. All of the surveys were developed in collaboration with YouthBuild USA.

Sites submitted monthly reports on attendance, terminations and achievements into a management information system maintained at Public/Private Ventures in Philadelphia. Public/Private Ventures also designed and provided interviewers to administer one of the base-line surveys face-to-face at each site. The survey included questions about household characteristics, criminal records, educational attainment, demographics, employment experience and open-ended questions on reasons for joining YouthBuild.

The other surveys were designed by Ron Ferguson in consultation with YouthBuild USA. Trainees completed the "Base-Line Survey on Life Style and Attitudes" on the first day of the program cycle. Most items were forced-choice. This survey collected information about the allocation of time to both legal and illegal activities in the months immediately prior to the program, attitudes and beliefs about methods of achieving success and various topics concerning expectations for the future. It also included items on reasons for joining YouthBuild. Many of the items on this base-line survey were repeated on the end-of-program survey that three of the five sites completed at the end of the second cycle.[1] The end-of-program survey also included items evaluating the quality of the program and self assessments on several dimensions of personal development.

The base-line survey on life style and attitudes and the end-of-program survey were administered by local staff members using instructions provided by the evaluation team. Each trainee who completed one of these questionnaires inserted it in a large envelope and signed across the seal to ensure confidentiality. Only the evaluation team in Cambridge opened these envelopes.

The questionnaire that participants completed around the forth and eighth months of the program was to gauge the quality of their experience in the program. For this survey, participants' names were optional and most chose to remain anonymous. The survey included questions about the importance to the trainee of various aspects of the program, reasons for their continued attendance, and evaluative questions regarding qualities of staff, directors and particular aspects of program implementation.

Finally, the survey of staff-youth relationships measured the quality of each staff member's relationship with each trainee, each month. The left column of the survey listed the names of all active trainees in alphabetical order. Each of six other columns had a heading ranging from "warm, close, open, positive" at one extreme, down through "tense, hostile" or "no relationship." Each staff member was asked to complete the survey each month. This survey was the most unconventional of our data collection instruments, but it turned out to be quite important as a source of information.

---

[1] Cleveland and Tallahassee are the sites that did not complete this survey. Gary's first cycle coincided with the second cycle for other sites, and officials at Gary agreed to have their trainees complete the end-of-program survey for both the first and second cycles.

Using data from the surveys described above, statistical procedures test causal hypotheses concerning trainees' performance and progress. Measures of performance during the program include attendance rates and the quality of the relationships that participants form with members of the staff. Measures of progress include rates of completion for the General Equivalency Diploma (GED), rates of positive termination from the program and changes from the base-line to the end of the program in several measures of personal development. The latter include indices of time management, leadership proclivity, concern for children an index called "ethics, drugs and crime."

Data from all of the surveys entered the statistical analyses upon which the chapters of this document report. In addition, information from site visits and interviews was critical. Clearly, it was the primary basis for the qualitative analyses. It also, however, was quite important for the generation of quantitative hypotheses and the interpretation of a few surprising findings.

The quantitative and qualitative analyses of youth development in this report are based in a set of ideas, a framework, that chapter 5 introduces and chapter 9 develops more extensively. These ideas evolved over the course of this project, through interaction with local YouthBuild staff and participants, the president and technical assistance staff at YouthBuild USA, and a community of scholars who share our interests.[2]

ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

Chapter 2, "Enrollments, Outcomes and External Comparisons," summarizes basic information about participants and outcomes across the ten site-years (five sites, two years) of the demonstration project. In addition, it presents comparisons of YouthBuild and five other programs that serve older adolescents and young adults in high risk urban environments. Chapter 3, "Development of the Demonstration Sites," summarizes the story of each local YouthBuild organization that participated in the demonstration. It also provides a brief review of the organizing and management role that YouthBuild USA played in leading the demonstration project.

---

[2] Special mention should be made of the "Committee on Neighborhoods, Family Processes and Schooling," of the Social Science Research Council Committee on the Urban Underclass. Ferguson was a member of this committee throughout the period of the YouthBuild Project and owes several members a debt of gratitude for helping to shape his thinking.

Chapter 4, "Construction," provides an analysis of the construction training component of the YouthBuild demonstration. All of the components and qualities of the program model are discussed as well in other chapters, especially in chapter 9. However, this chapter singles out construction for special attention. One selling point of the YouthBuild program is that young people "build housing that the community needs" while they are in training. Combining training with building real housing that people need is where funders and YouthBuild USA expected sites to have the greatest challenges. It was therefore important to track these challenges and to learn from them in detail for the benefit of future sites.

Chapter 5 introduces the analysis of youth development for a section of the report called "Predicting Program Performance." It outlines the basic ideas that guide the analysis, defines key variables that later chapters use to explain outcomes and presents various summary tables for the variables that it introduces. Chapter 6 reports results concerning predictors of staff-youth relationships and absenteeism. Chapter 7 concerns predictors of positive termination rates and rates of GED completion. Chapter 8 presents results from simulations based on the estimates from chapter 7. The simulations are of a type that have potential applications in judging program performance and setting targets for performance.

Chapter 9 is a long chapter. It describes each of five developmental tasks and associated stages that trainees may experience as they use the YouthBuild program as a vehicle for personal development. Examples from the demonstration project show both good and bad practices by members of the staff that can facilitate or sabotage the developmental process for participants. Chapter 10 uses quantitative data to examine further some of the ideas about the process of development in YouthBuild that chapter 9 handles in a purely qualitative way.

Finally, the chapter 11 summarizes the most salient findings from the body of the report.

UTILITY OF THIS REPORT

During and after the period of the demonstration project, YouthBuild USA mobilized program participants to help in the drive to raise funds from the federal government, just as youth from the Youth Action Project and Banana Kelly in the 1980s raised funds from the City of New York. The drive was successful. YouthBuild programs currently operate in dozens of cities with the help of federal funding. Some chapters of this report have already been circulated and the findings have already been used as the basis for presentations. In this manner, some of the lessons from the YouthBuild demonstration have already been shared with audiences that include directors and staff members of the federally funded sites as well as funders and other researchers. Now, with the distribution of the full report, the process of learning from the demonstration and building on the experience that it provided will continue. If used properly, the report can inform refinements to program design and staffing patterns, criteria for recruitment and selection of participants, staff training and more.

CHAPTER 2

ENROLLMENTS, OUTCOMES AND EXTERNAL COMPARISONS

The YouthBuild demonstration project lasted for two full cycles of the program. Typically, a cycle lasted for nine to twelve months, with up to four months between cycles allotted for planning. This chapter reports data for 177 participants who enrolled in YouthBuild for the second cycle of the demonstration.[3] In addition, it provides comparisons with the first cycle for some characteristics of participants and some outcomes. Summary tabulations for both cycles appear in the appendix to this chapter.

In addition to the data for YouthBuild, we present data from other programs to illustrate similarities and differences between YouthBuild and other prominent interventions for at-risk youth.[4] The others that we describe are the Urban Corps Expansion Project, the New York City Volunteer Corps, Non-Residential Job Corps Centers, Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) programs for youth and JOBSTART. The programs differ in their designs but serve the same types of communities and the same general age groups.

The most distinctive difference between YouthBuild participants and those in the other programs is that 85 percent of YouthBuild participants are males and the majority of these males are African American and Hispanic. The other programs (aside from JTPA) also serve mostly minorities, but they have more equal representation of males and females. Research on programs for adolescents in high risk environments finds generally that minority males are the most difficult to keep in the programs. It is therefore noteworthy that YouthBuild participants achieve equal or better lengths of stay as compared to the proportionately more female cohorts in the other programs. Among the programs that we cite, only Jobstart has a longer average length of stay. Among participants whose departures from the program can be classified as positive or negative, a full 69 percent of participants in the second year of the YouthBuild demonstration project achieved positive terminations.[5] Compared with other programs, YouthBuild may have a distinctive competence for working with young minority males.

---

[3] We focus on the second year because the documentation team agreed with directors from the demonstration sites that the second year of the demonstration would be the primary focus in reporting measures of program performance. Except for the site in Gary, the second cycle of the demonstration ran from the fall of 1992 through the summer of 1993. Gary began and finished a year later than the other sites, so that its second cycle ended in the summer of 1994.

[4] Data discussed in the text but not displayed in the attached tables are available at P/PV.

ENROLLMENT

YouthBuild programs enroll 16- to 24-year-olds in cohorts of roughly 25 to 40 participants who, ideally, will stay together for the entire program. In most cases, the cohort divides into two teams of roughly equal size that alternate weeks on the construction site and in the classroom. Instruction in the classroom provides academic remediation and preparation for the General Equivalency Diploma (GED) or, less frequently, the high school degree. In addition, the two teams usually come together at least once every week for joint activities such as leadership training or special presentations.

When participants leave before the conclusion of the program year, programs sometimes recruit new participants to fill the vacant slots. A total of 177 youth enrolled in the five YouthBuild sites during the second year of the demonstration, including some who filled slots left vacant by leavers.

CHARACTERISTICS

The YouthBuild demonstration sites served participants who were mostly males and people of color. More than eight out of ten YouthBuild enrollees (84%) in the second year were male. The mean age of second-year enrollees was 21.2, with 85 percent aged 18 or older. Seventy-one percent were black; 15 percent were Hispanic; 7 percent were Native American, Asian/Pacific Islander, multi-racial or other; and 7 percent were white.

---

[5] Seventeen percent of participants in the second year of the YouthBuild demonstration project left for reasons that could not be classified as positive or negative.

Base line data show that YouthBuild participants faced significant barriers to success in the mainstream economy. These include low educational attainment, limited family resources and high rates of involvement with the criminal justice system. About one third (32%) reported having either a high school diploma or GED at the time they came to the program. Twenty-two percent reported no jobs since leaving high school, while 40 percent had held one to three jobs since school. One in three had participated in a public job training program before YouthBuild.

Participants were financially poor. More than three quarters (77%) came from households with annual incomes of less than $15,000. Almost 90 percent had household incomes of less than $25,000. About half (55%) lived in households that received some form of public assistance in the six months before the program. However, only 16 percent lived in public housing during the same period.

Not surprisingly, a significant number reported that they lived in high risk neighborhoods. Seventeen percent said they did not feel safe in their neighborhood; 67 percent said lack of jobs was a major neighborhood problem; 54 percent said drugs and drug dealing were major problems; and a third named gangs and violence.

About one third (31%) of trainees who enrolled during the second year of the demonstration had been convicted of a felony and 34 percent had served time in jail. Eighteen percent had been in treatment for drug or alcohol abuse.

The data suggest that the trainees who enrolled during the second year of the demonstration were more disadvantaged than those who attended the first year. They were more likely to come from poor households (77% in the second year versus 64% in the first year) and to have been involved with the criminal justice system (65% in the second year versus 49% in the first). Only one measure of trainee characteristics improves from the first to the second year of the demonstration: more in the second year had completed high school or earned the GED prior to entering the program (32% in the second year versus 27% in the first).

In short, YouthBuild enrolles have characteristics that signal limited prospects for success in the mainstream labor market. Without the type of help that YouthBuild and other second-chance programs aim to provide, it seems likely that participants are at high risk for continued high levels of involvement with the criminal justice and welfare systems, and dependence on income transfer programs or earnings from illegal activity. Most of these young people were clearly in need of support and opportunity.

The same is true for many of their households. The majority were from households that depended in some measure on financial contributions from the YouthBuild participant. Sixty-one percent of participants reported that the household in which they resided depended in part on their income for survival, up from about half in the first year of the demonstration. Fifty-one percent of second-year enrolles reported having children, and over half of these (58%) lived with their children. This suggests that the social benefits of helping YouthBuild participants extend beyond their personal well-being to that of children and other adults who share their households.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE

The attendance rate at YouthBuild during the second year of the demonstration averaged about 85 percent, identical to that for the first year. Excluding Cleveland (because its cycle was shorter than the others), trainees actively participated in YouthBuild activities for an average of 20 weeks during the second year of the demonstration. On average, they spent 27.9 hours per week in YouthBuild activities, up from 25.9 hours per week for the first year.

Some YouthBuild programs offer education and work opportunities during the same week, but most sites alternate between work (i.e., training in construction) one week and education the next. About 60 percent of the total time in the program was devoted to the education component during the second year. Trainees spent about 26.1 hours per week during weeks devoted mostly to the education component. This was almost identical to the number of hours per week (26.5) that trainees spent during weeks devoted mostly to the construction component. Smaller amounts of time were spent in counseling, in community service and in other extracurricular activities.

Sites reported data for several types of achievements in the first year of the demonstration, including attendance and mastery of work-site skills. With the exception of the GED, however, standards for calibrating these achievements were defined by the individual sites. This made it difficult to generalize across sites. In the second year, it was agreed that data for achievement would be collected only for measures that had standard definitions across the sites.

Little progress took place in producing such standards. Thus, in the second year of the demonstration, the only type of data that we tracked measuring achievement (other than positive and negative terminations) were data on GED completions. Twenty percent of trainees who entered without a high school degree or a GED achieved either a GED or high school diploma in the second year, compared with 23% in the first year.

YouthBuild participants (excluding Cleveland, which had a shorter cycle) spent an average of between 5.6 and 6.3 months in the program during the second year, depending on how length-of-stay is calculated.[6] First-year participants stayed longer: 98 percent stayed in the program for 30 days and 65 percent for 180 days, for an 8.3 month average length of stay. For second-year trainees, 90 percent stayed in the program for 30 days and 60 percent for 180 days. The profile of trainees in the second year shows that they were on average a more difficult group to serve.

---

[6] The traditional method, calculated by averaging the length of stay for all participants from the beginning date until the date of termination, produces a length of stay for YouthBuild sites of 5.8 months. However, because there was a difference of at least 30 days between the date of the last attendance log and the date of termination for 71 trainees (which artificially inflated the length of stay), length of stay was also

It is worth noting before moving on that increasing the average length of stay is not always the desired outcome. The usual assumption is that length of stay will be shorter in programs where more trainees quit or are expelled. Here, longer length of stay is better. However, length of stay will also be shorter for sites that make more agressive efforts to place work-ready trainees in jobs expeditiously and at sites that are stricter about early expulsion for trainees who have poor attendance. In latter are examples that may lead stronger sites toward having shorter average lengths of stay. Indeed, one of the reasons that YouthBuild demonstration sites achieved an 85 percent attendance rate is that youth were sometimes expelled for poor attendance.

PROGRAM LEAVERS

Of the 177 second-year enrolles, 12 remained into the next cycle after the program year ended. Seventeen percent left the program for reasons that cannot be classified as positive or negative in assessing program performance. Examples include death and relocation of the family. The rate of positive termination was 57 percent overall, or 69 percent among trainees who left for reasons that could be classified as positive or negative.[7] The statistical analysis in chapter 7 of this report estimates the degree to

---

calculated using the last attendance log instead of the termination date. The length of stay was 5.2 months when computed in this fashion.

[7] Of those with positive terminations, five enrolles left because they had stayed the maximum period; 62 left for full-time employment, school or training; and an additional seven left for part-time employment, school or training. Eighteen left for what the sites said were positive reasons, but which they did not specify.

Eighteen participants were terminated for poor attendance or performance; eleven were terminated for fighting, alcohol or drugs, or insubordination; and four left because of dissatisfaction with the program.

which particular characteristics of trainees help to predict who achieves positive termination and who does not, among those whose terminations are clearly positive or negative.

Compared with trainees from the first year, trainees in the second year were more likely to enter jobs related to construction. Two-thirds of participants who went directly into jobs when they left YouthBuild, went to jobs related to construction that paid an average wage of $7.60 per hour. The other third found jobs outside of construction at an average wage of $6.80 per hour. During the first year of the program, only 44 percent of trainees who left for employment obtained work related to construction.

While the average wage for construction-related jobs was higher, trainees in such jobs were less likely than the others to receive health insurance. Sixty-seven percent of trainees in non-construction-related jobs had health insurance, compared with only 38 percent of trainees in construction-related jobs.

Differences across sites in the average wages trainees achieved upon graduating from the program mirror the wage levels of the participating localities. According to the Department of Commerce, San Francisco had the highest average annual salary among the demonstration sites in 1989, followed by Boston, Cleveland, Gary and Tallahassee.

In sum, records from the demonstration project indicate that trainees and program staff may have been more focused on obtaining employment during the second year of the demonstration. While the average length of stay was slightly shorter for the second year, records indicate that trainees who attended during the second year were more likely to acquire full-time jobs upon leaving the program (34% compared with 26% for first-year enrolles.)

Another ten were terminated for unknown negative reasons. One youth died and nine others left because they moved or for family reasons. Twenty left for unknown reasons.

COMPARABLE PROGRAMS

Many employment and training programs initiated during the past 30 years have included youth participants. Studies of these programs indicate that while structured work experience can provide income for youth, other offerings such as academic remediation are necessary in order to improve prospects for employment beyond the program. YouthBuild shares some of the same goals as earlier initiatives, so we sought to compare some of the performance data from YouthBuild with those from similar initiatives that were evaluated in the mid-1980s to early 1990s.

Upon reviewing the literature we determined that only limited comparisons are feasible. The programs differ significantly in both design and implementation. For example, no two are the same in the degree to which developing *esprit de corps* among participants and soliciting their input in decision making are emphasized. Additionally, program measures for which data are available vary, with few reported for all programs.

Below, we present information on five initiatives, all of which are employment and training programs with work and education components that serve minority youth.[8] They include the Urban Corps Expansion Project (UCEP), the New York City Volunteer Corps (CVC), Job Corps, the Job Training and Partnership Act (JTPA) and Jobstart. While some of these programs have residential components, only non-residential participants were included for this discussion.

---

[8] The sources for this information are the following:

New York City Volunteer Corps:
Alvia Y. Branch and Marc Freedman, The New York City Volunteer Corps: Interim Report. Public/Private Ventures, Philadelphia PA, November 1986.

Urban Corps Expansion Project:
Final Progress Report to the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Public/Private Ventures, Philadelphia PA, July 1994.

Job Corps:
Charles Mallar, Stuart Kerachsky, Craig Thornton and David Long. Evaluation of the Economic Impact of the Job Corps Program. Third Follow-Up Report. Princeton NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. 1991

JOBSTART:
George Cave and Fred Doolittle, Assessing JOBSTART: Interim Impacts of a Program for High School Dropouts. New York: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation, 1991.

Job Training Partnership Act:
Howard Bloom, Larry Orr, George Cave, Steven Bell and Fred Doolittle. The National JTPA Study: Title IIA Impacts on Earnings and Employment at 18 Months. Prepared for the U.S. Department of Labor. Abt Associates Inc., January 1993.

Some basic features of these programs are as follows:

- Urban Corps Expansion Project (UCEP). Launched in 1989. Non-residential UCEP enrolls unemployed young men and women in small crews under close adult supervision to complete projects that meet demonstrated community needs. Corpsmembers spend approximately 30 percent of their time in the educational component and the remainder conducting work projects. A sense of community among participants is pursued through corpsmember councils and team-building.

- New York City Volunteer Corps (CVC). A non-residential program in operation since 1984, CVC utilizes 17- to 20-year-old New York residents to deliver human services to the homeless, the elderly, the disabled and other dependent populations whose needs might otherwise go unserved. There is also an educational component, although it is not as central to the program as the delivery of human services. Participants conduct their work in teams and empowerment of the team is a central goal of the program. Disadvantaged youth are not targeted for participation, but many corpsmembers are financially poor.

- Non-residential Job Corps Centers. Job Corps' primary emphasis is education through the provision of academic, vocational, counseling and related services for economically and educationally disadvantaged youth aged 16 through 21. Participants work in crews, as in YouthBuild, but the manner in which the centers convey the program ethos differs from city to city. For example, in Philadelphia the staff models appropriate behavior and social conventions, whereas in New Orleans the emphasis is on discipline and sanctions similar to that of the residential Job Corps.

- Job Training and Partnership Act (JTPA). JTPA funds the major federal program providing job training and other employment-related services for economically disadvantaged people. Young people under age 22 participated in the National JTPA Study for this age group. They received basic education without training (37%), classroom training in occupational skills (36%), on-the-job training (16%) and job search assistance (11%).

- Jobstart. Between 1985 and 1988, Jobstart provided education and training, support services and job placement assistance to economically disadvantaged 17- to 21-year-old school dropouts

> with poor reading skills. Jobstart's major goal was to increase the employment and earnings and to reduce the welfare receipt of young, low-skilled school dropouts. Participants spent 31 percent of their time in basic education classes, with the remainder in occupational training and other activities. Instruction was primarily individualized and there was no program emphasis on developing group camaraderie.

The YouthBuild program's philosophy is more similar to CVC and UCEP than to JTPA and Jobstart. CVC and UCEP, both team-based youth corps, undertook a concerted effort to develop team spirit and civic-mindedness among enrollees. YouthBuild also works to engender a sense of group unity and an interest in community participation and leadership. JTPA and Jobstart, on the other hand, are focused on the narrowly defined economic welfare of the individual participant. Job Corps appears to be mixed: sites vary in the extent to which they fostered team identity and citizenship. It seems likely that programs that use team-building among participants and that also focus on community service are more likely to develop strong relationships among participants and between participants and members of the program staff. As later chapters of this report show, good relationships are an important foundation for the hard work of human development that each of these programs hopes to foster.

COMPARING DEMOGRAPHICS

Major differences among programs in the characteristics of participants can lead to corresponding variations in program effectiveness. Here, since both the models and the characteristics of participants differ among the programs, any hard-and-fast conclusions about explanations for observed differences in outcomes among the listed programs would be unwarranted.

Some studies find that program effectiveness differs according to the gender of the participant, with males often characterized as harder to serve. Therefore, the proportion of male and female enrolles should influence measures of program impact (Table 2.1). Most programs have equal percentages of male and female enrolles with the exception of UCEP (69% male enrollees) and YouthBuild (84% male enrollees). YouthBuild's focus on training for construction may help to explain its largely male clientele.

Another characteristic of participants that may affect program outcomes is the percentage of enrollees who are parents, since the demands of parenthood may supersede program requirements. With 51% of its trainees reporting that they had children, YouthBuild had the largest proportion of enrollees who were parents. This is surprising, given that YouthBuild also had the lowest percentage of female trainees. Perhaps the responsibilities associated with raising children make it difficult for women to participate in such programs without provisions for child care, whereas young fathers are not as likely to be hindered by child care concerns.

There is little variation across programs in the socioeconomic status of trainees. All involve a significant proportion of disadvantaged youth.

Finally, as to participants' levels of education prior to entering the program, Jobstart and Job Corps served the most educationally disadvantaged trainees, as 0% and 13% of their enrollees, respectively, had either a GED or high school diploma at the time that they entered the program. In the other programs, the percentages of trainees who entered with either a GED or high school diploma ranged from 26% to 46%. Participants in the YouthBuild demonstration had the second highest average level of education, following participants in JTPA.

IN-PROGRAM IMPACTS

Each program reports different measures of in-program impacts, with only two measures consistently collected across programs: average length of stay and the percentage of enrollees who obtained a GED during the program. As Table 2.1 indicates, trainees who participated in the YouthBuild demonstration were very similar to those in the other programs on these two measures.

The average length of stay ranges from about 5 months to almost 7 months across programs, with YouthBuild enrolles staying an average of 6.3 months. There are also similar rates of GED attainment across all the programs (10% to 20%) except CVC, in which only 3% received the GED. Based upon these measures, YouthBuild appears to be comparable to other initiatives in its capacity to retain the participation of enrollees and to assist them in pursuing their educational objectives through receipt of the GED.

While this chapter is an overview, so that looking at averages is warranted, looking only at averages can be misleading. Length of stay and rates of positive termination and GED completion varied among the YouthBuild demonstration sites. Later chapters of this report take advantage of the variation, using statistical analysis to test hypotheses about why some participants and sites did so much better than the others.

CONCLUSION

This chapter reviews the background characteristics, positive termination rates, length of stay and GED completion rates of youth who participated in the YouthBuild demonstration project. It also reviews data on participant characteristics, length of stay and GED completion from five other programs that serve similar populations. The data show that the YouthBuild demonstration had an average length of stay and a rate of GED completion superior to most of the other programs that we described, but YouthBuild did so serving a population that included a much larger share of minority males. Generally, evaluations show that minority males are the most difficult to serve. Hence, compared to other programs, it appears that YouthBuild is probably distinctive in its capacity to retain and serve this important group.

Table 2A.1

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF ENROLLES IN YOUTHBUILD AND FIVE COMPARISON PROGRAMS

	Youth Build (92-93)	UCEP (92-93)	Job Corps (89-90)	CVC (86-87)	JTPA (87-89)	Jobstart (85-88)
Percent female enrolles	16	31	63	45	56	53
Percent minority enrolles	93	95	94	98	48	92
Percent receiving public assistance	55	54	66	33	24	58
Percent who are parents	51	37	36	NA	NA	32(*)
Percent who enter w/diploma or GED	32	26	13(**)	27	46	0

Notes:

* Includes men who were parents and women who lived with their children.
** Includes only enrolles who had completed grade 12 at entry.

Table 2A.2

IN-PROGRAM IMPACTS FOR ENROLLES IN YOUTHBUILD AND FOUR COMPARISON PROGRAMS

	Youth Build (92-93)	UCEP (92-93)	Job Corps (89-90)	CVC (86-87)	JTPA (87-89)	Jobstart (85-88)
Average length of stay in months	6.3	5.6	(*)	5.8	5.3(**)	6.8
Percent who achieved GED	20	NA	10	3	NA	13

Notes:

* 232 paid days

** Includes enrollees who received classroom training in occupational skills only (CT-OS), or CT-OS in combination with on the job training, basic education, job search assistance or miscellaneous program services.

YouthBuild Information System
All Cases with Enrollment Date
Year 1 (1992-93 for Gary/1991-92 for all other Sites)

	Cleveland OH	San Francisco CA	Tallahassee FL	Boston MA	Gary IN	All Sites
ENROLLMENT PROFILES						
Total Ever Enrolled	51	36	38	33	30	188
Total Number Ever Terminated (as of 7/1/94)	51	36	34	33	30	184
Number in Cohort 1		33	29	33	20	115
Number in Cohort Enrolled at Year End		13	9	18	10	50
RACE						
Percent White Non-Hispanic	10%	6%	21%		17%	11%
Percent African-American Non-Hispanic	84%	53%	68%	88%	57%	71%
Percent Hispanic	2%	25%		9%	17%	10%
Percent Native American			11%		3%	3%
Percent Asian/Pacific Islander		14%				3%
Percent Multi-Racial	4%	3%			3%	2%
Percent Other				3%	3%	1%
PERSONAL BACKGROUND						
Mean Age	21.6	19.7	18.4	21.8	19.9	20.4
Percent 18 or Over	92%	81%	53%	100%	93%	84%
Percent Who Are Parents	39%	36%	11%	52%	37%	35%
Percent Female	8%	22%	24%	18%		14%
Percent with Family Incomes under $15,000	71%	65%	61%	61%	57%	64%
Percent of Households Receiving Public Assistance	82%	57%	42%	42%	47%	57%
Percent in Public Housing	18%	17%	14%	18%		14%

	Cleveland OH	San Francisco CA	Tallahassee FL	Boston MA	Gary IN	All Sites
EDUCATION BACKGROUND						
Percent with High School Diploma	39%	8%		21%	30%	21%
Percent with GED	14%	3%		9%	3%	6%
CRIMINAL HISTORY						
Percent Convicted of a Felony	29%	40%	21%	15%	13%	25%
Percent Served Time in Jail	29%	47%	18%	12%	10%	24%
Percent Joined Program as Condition of Parole	6%					2%
Percent Ever in Alcohol/Drug Treatment Program	14%	14%	13%		7%	10%
IN-PROGRAM MEASURES						
WEEKS ATTENDED[1]						
Average Weeks Attended	(16.6)	26.9	32.8	31.1	38.3	32.1
Average Education Weeks Attended	(13.4)	13.4	17.1	15.6	21.2	16.6
Average Work Weeks Attended	(4.2)	14.2	15.8	15.6	17.4	15.7
WEEKLY HOURS						
Average Program Hours Attended	18.9	26.2	21.6	29.7	31.9	25.9
Average Weekly Education Hours	17.0	22.3	20.1	29.8	31.5	23.9
Average Weekly Work Hours	20.3	28.8	23.1	29.6	32.1	27.5
Average Weekly Attendance Rate	78%	84%	81%	86%	93%	85%
CUMULATIVE PERCENT OF COMPETENCIES ACHIEVED						
Percent Completing GED or High School (of Those Enrolling without GED High School)	50%	16%	16%	22%	20%	23%
Academic Unit Completion	69%	39%	47%	88%	87%	65%

---

[1] Cleveland is excluded from calculation of Weeks Attended for all sites because their program has a shorter cycle than the typical YouthBuild program.

	Cleveland OH	San Francisco CA	Tallahassee FL	Boston MA	Gary IN	All Sites
Work Site Skills Training	71%			88%	87%	48%
Special Training	73%			100%	73%	49%
Leadership Skills	76%		32%	100%	87%	59%
Promotion	37%			3%		11%
Pay Raise			26%	48%		14%
Attendance	20%	81%	32%	100%		60%
Other	18%			79%		19%
CUMULATIVE TERMINATIONS						
Number of Terminations	51	36	34	33	30	184
REASON FOR LEAVING						
Percent Full-time Employment	39%	17%		48%	20%	26%
Percent Full-time School	2%		15%			3%
Percent Full-Time Training				3%		1%
Percent Part-time Employment, School or Training		3%				1%
Percent Other Positive Termination	39%		15%	3%	53%	23%
Percent Poor Attendance	8%	28%	18%	21%	23%	18%
Percent Poor Performance		3%	3%			1%
Percent Insubordination/Fighting/Criminal		6%	3%		3%	2%
Percent Alcohol/Drugs		3%	9%			2%
Percent Other Negative Termination	8%	14%	15%	3%		8%
Percent Moved Away			6%	3%		2%
Percent Family Needs		3%	6%			1%
Percent Dissatisfied with Program			6%			1%
Percent Deceased			3%	3%		1%

	Cleveland OH	San Francisco CA	Tallahassee FL	Boston MA	Gary IN	All Sites
Percent Maximum Time in Program	4%	25%	3%	15%		9%
TYPE OF JOB						
Percent Post Program Placement	35%	19%	3%	55%	20%	27%
Percent Construction Jobs	17%	71%		72%	17%	44%
Percent Other Jobs	83%	29%	100%	28%	83%	56%
Average Hourly Placement Wage	6.69	7.46	6.00	8.22	6.34	7.31
LENGTH OF STAY ANALYSIS[2]						
Average Length of Stay for Exited Trainees Enrollment-Termination (mos.)	(5.7)	6.9	9.2	7.9	9.5	8.3
Average Length of Stay for Exited Trainees Enrollment Last Log (mos.)	(4.6)	6.7	9.7	7.3	9.2	8.2
Percent Stayed in Program 30 Days	(100%)	97%	95%	100%	100%	98%
Percent Stayed in Program 180 Days	(39%)	58%	63%	61%	93%	65%

---

[2] Cleveland is excluded from calculations of Length of Stay for all sites because their program has a shorter cycle than the typical YouthBuild program.

YouthBuild Information System
All Cases with Enrollment Date
Year 2 (1993-94 for Gary/1992-93 for all other Sites)

	Cleveland OH	San Francisco CA	Tallahassee FL	Boston MA	Gary IN	All Sites
ENROLLMENT PROFILES						
Total Ever Enrolled	42	28	37	49	21	177
Total Number Ever Terminated (as of 7/1/94)	42	28	27	48	20	165
Number in Cohort 2			15	39	21	75
Number in Cohort Enrolled at Year End			3	21	11	35
RACE						
Percent White Non-Hispanic	12%		19%	2%		7%
Percent African-American Non-Hispanic	81%	64%	78%	63%	62%	71%
Percent Hispanic	2%	25%		22%	33%	75%
Percent Native American	2%			2%		1%
Percent Asian/Pacific Islander		11%				2%
Percent Multi-Racial	2%			6%		2%
Percent Other			3%	4%	5%	2%
PERSONAL BACKGROUND						
Mean Age	23.5	21.5	18.2	22.3	18.9	21.2
Percent 18 or Over	98%	89%	51%	98%	86%	85%
Percent Who Are Parents	71%	50%	24%	63%	29%	51%
Percent Female	5%	18%	30%	22%		16%
Percent with Family Incomes under $15,000	72%	57%	96%	80%	81%	77%
Percent of Households Receiving Public Assistance	74%	64%	49%	39%	52%	55%
Percent in Public Housing	7%	19%	16%	23%	14%	16%

	Cleveland OH	San Francisco CA	Tallahassee FL	Boston MA	Gary IN	All Sites
EDUCATION BACKGROUND						
Percent with High School Diploma	62%	14%	3%	12%		20%
Percent with GED	33%			16%		12%
CRIMINAL HISTORY						
Percent Convicted of a Felony	29%	36%	35%	35%	10%	31%
Percent Served Time in Jail	29%	46%	27%	33%	48%	34%
Percent Joined Program as Condition of Parole	2%		11%	4%	19%	6%
Percent Ever in Alcohol/Drug Treatment Program	12%	25%	11%	24%	19%	18%
IN-PROGRAM MEASURES						
WEEKS ATTENDED[1]						
Average Weeks Attended	(15.0)	17.8	17.8	20.1	29.6	20.3
Average Education Weeks Attended	(12.6)	8.8	8.8	12.0	20.9	11.6
Average Work Weeks Attended	(6.9)	9.1	9.3	8.2	8.7	8.7
WEEKLY HOURS						
Average Program Hours Attended	19.0	27.8	21.7	36.3	31.0	27.9
Average Weekly Education Hours	14.5	26.5	21.1	36.4	31.3	26.1
Average Weekly Work Hours	15.0	29.1	21.7	36.3	30.2	26.5
Average Weekly Attendance Rate	78%	82%	77%	90%	90%	85%
CUMULATIVE PERCENT OF COMPETENCIES ACHIEVED						
Percent Completing GED or High School (of Those Enrolling without GED High School)	14%		19%	45%		20%

---

[1] Cleveland is excluded from calculation of Weeks Attended for all sites because their program has a shorter cycle than the typical YouthBuild program.

	Cleveland OH	San Francisco CA	Tallahassee FL	Boston MA	Gary IN	All Sites
CUMULATIVE TERMINATIONS						
Number of Terminations	42	28	27	48	20	165
REASON FOR LEAVING						
Percent Full-time Employment	57%		4%	56%	20%	34%
Percent Full-time School				2%	10%	2%
Percent Full-Time Training					15%	2%
Percent Part-time Employment, School or Training		4%		4%	20%	4%
Percent Other Positive Termination	24%		30%			11%
Percent Poor Attendance	5%	4%	22%	8%	15%	10%
Percent Poor Performance			7%			1%
Percent Insubordination/Fighting/Criminal			11%			2%
Percent Alcohol/Drugs	2%		7%	10%		5%
Percent Other Negative Termination	7%	7%	7%	2%	10%	6%
Percent Moved Away		4%		2%	10%	2%
Percent Family Needs	5%	4%		4%		3%
Percent Dissatisfied with Program		14%				2%
Percent Deceased				2%		1%
Percent Maximum Time in Program			4%	8%		3%
No Reason Given		64%	7%			12%
TYPE OF JOB						
Percent Post Program Placement	55%			52%	35%	33%
Percent Construction Jobs	65%			72%	29%	64%
Percent Other Jobs	35%			28%	71%	36%
Average Hourly Placement Wage	6.17			8.98	4.71	7.31

	Cleveland OH	San Francisco CA	Tallahassee FL	Boston MA	Gary IN	All Sites
Percent of All Placements with Health Insurance	41%			63%		47%
LENGTH OF STAY ANALYSIS[2]						
Average Length of Stay for Exited Trainees Enrollment-Termination (mos.)	(4.5)	5.3	5.0	6.9	7.2	6.3
Average Length of Stay for Exited Trainees Enrollment Last Log (mos.)	(3.8)	5.8	4.7	5.5	7.0	5.6
Percent Stayed in Program 30 Days	(98%)	96%	86%	92%	86%	90%
Percent Stayed in Program 180 Days	(7%)	54%	49%	65%	76%	60%

---

[2] Cleveland is excluded from calculations of Length of Stay for all sites because their program has a shorter cycle than the typical YouthBuild program.

PART II

DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEMONSTRATION SITES AND THE CONSTRUCTION TRAINING COMPONENT

by Philip L. Clay

CHAPTER 3

DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEMONSTRATION SITES

This chapter describes and summarizes the development of each of the YouthBuild demonstration sites. In outlining the demonstration programs, we detail several features for each of the five programs. Major elements of the story include:

1. origin of the program and sponsorship;
2. unique features and their consequences for the demonstration;
3. relevant environmental issues that shaped the design, development and implementation of the local demonstration efforts;
4. significant shifts in program features over the course of the demonstration;
5. special issues that will help the reader understand future sections of the report; and
6. comparisons among the sites, where appropriate.

In the early stages of this project, we sought to discern what the key aspects of this program documentation should include. While these informal hypotheses about program outcomes would not prevent us from discovering new dimensions, we wanted to gather information and organize our observations in a way that would provide information to future program developers and funders. In order to identify key aspects of the YouthBuild program, we reviewed documents, attended training retreats, held meetings with staff of demonstration programs and consulted with staff at YouthBuild USA. As a result of these explorations, we came to the conclusion that by its design, the program assumes six factors are critical to the success of YouthBuild demonstration program:

1. high quality and effective executive leadership and planning;
2. consistent adherence to the YouthBuild program design and philosophy;
3. adequate and flexible program funding;
4. a high and consistent level of community support;
5. willingness to use technical assistance, including the services of YouthBuild USA; and
6. good quality and appropriate construction training and construction projects.

In the program descriptions below we organize our observations to address aspects of the programs dealing with factors 1 through 4 above. Factor 5, having to do with the use of technical assistance, is addressed only modestly. Factor 6 is discussed in great detail in chapter 4. With regards to factor 2, there is also considerable detail in chapter 9.

While at the outset all of these factors seemed potentially important, executive leadership gets special attention. Between new and small programs and organizations needing to sell the program to local funders and stakeholders, on the one hand, and inexperienced young people who have little reason to have trust in the program, on the other hand, the effectiveness of a leader or a small number of people who initiate and build a program is essential for strength in the other factors and for the initial outcomes of the program.

YOUTHBUILD: THE ORGANIZATIONAL MODEL

Figure 1 outlines the typical organization of a YouthBuild program. The prototype organization consists of an executive director, office and administrative support staff and other staff allocated in various configurations to cover education, program management, counseling and construction/training. The nomenclature, more than configurations, vary among the demonstration programs. The differences often relate to the formal structure of the organization rather than the functional areas. The programs and their staff organizations are discussed in sections below.

There are some structural differences among the sites that are worth noting. First, programs vary in whether they are freestanding or embedded in a larger organization. The Boston and San Francisco programs are freestanding and had by the end of the demonstration additional staff beyond what is identified in Figure 1 as core program staff. In other sites where YouthBuild is part of another organization, administrative support comes from staff with only a limited role in the YouthBuild program. Freestanding programs also have their own boards of directors to which the YouthBuild director reports.

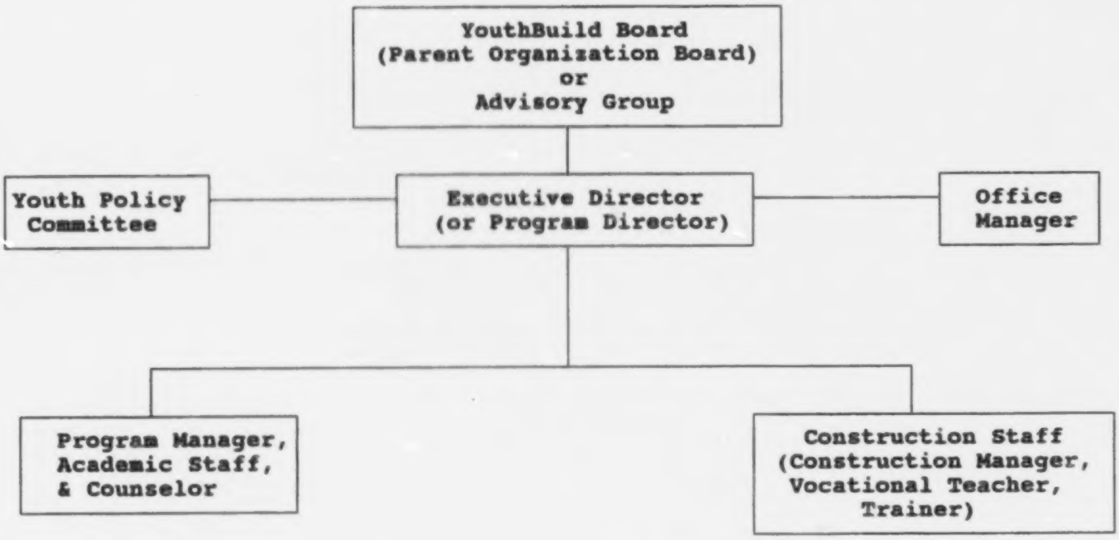
Three YouthBuild demonstration programs are part of larger organizations: Tallahassee is embedded within the Tallahassee Housing Foundation; Cleveland YouthBuild is part of the United Labor Agency; and the Gary Program is sponsored by the Tree of Life CDC. In each of these, YouthBuild staff report to the agency head who is responsible to the organization's board. At different times and with varying degrees, each had an advisory group specifically for YouthBuild.

All of the programs have an executive director or program director who has overall responsibility for developing the YouthBuild program, raising funds, selecting projects, hiring staff, and exerting leadership both with staff and young people. They also report to their boards, parent organization (if applicable) and funders, and represent the program in the larger community. The programs have staff support from a secretary, receptionist or office manager. The Boston program, which is one year older and a more fully developed free-standing program, had additional support from a fiscal manager, development staff person and an executive assistant by the end of its demonstration.

The rest of the staff in the demonstration projects fall into the functional areas of program management, education, counseling and construction training. Programs that have experienced the most difficulty are often the ones where the various program roles have been inadequately defined or staffed, where there has been significant turnover in key positions and where the duties of coordination normally associated with the program manager position are scattered in the organization. Tallahassee suffered most dramatically in this respect. Tallahassee spent half of the first cycle with the program manager position either vacant or in a state of turmoil. Staff problems hampered the program in Year One and into the next cycle when YouthBuild USA had to send in two national staff members to spend weeks on program and staff development.

FIGURE 3.1

THE TYPICAL YOUTHBUILD ORGANIZATION


YouthBuild Board (Parent Organization Board) or Advisory Group
Youth Policy Committee
Executive Director (or Program Director)
Office Manager
Program Manager, Academic Staff, & Counselor
Construction Staff (Construction Manager, Vocational Teacher, Trainer)

Significantly, in most cases, the program manager is not responsible for coordinating the construction training and basic education with other elements. The construction training side of the operation is mostly separate from, or parallel to, the rest of the program. The executive director or program director is responsible for the integration. Boston achieved the greatest integration while in Tallahassee these elements were the least connected.

Each program had a construction manager or person with a similar title who had overall responsibility for construction training, project development and construction management. Given the background of position incumbent, other staff and program features, integrating the function was a challenge. Often very good people were put in this new and evolving position. The construction trainer may have been an original and deeply involved staff member as in YouthBuild Boston or, alternatively, in the case of Gary, a tradesman brought in from the outside with at best a limited investment in the YouthBuild model. In the case of Tallahassee, the construction training was provided by the Lively Vocational School (part of the Leon County school system) while the YouthBuild program provided the on-site construction supervisor. In Cleveland, the incumbent union staff members played these roles but with the union culture, not the YouthBuild culture, framing their operation.

The construction manager's responsibility involves identifying a project, packaging it and phasing its work to other milestones in construction training, overseeing the training and other program elements. Incumbents in this role have duties similar to a project manager in a Community Development Corporation (CDC). A construction manager is typically responsible for identifying projects and carrying them through the development process -- from conception to funding, construction and on to completion.

YouthBuild construction staff did not typically have a project management background. They were more often experienced tradesmen. Boston, and to some extent Gary, were exceptions in this regard. YouthBuild's construction manager's work was most closely related to the construction management aspect of the development process. In typical CDCs, the project manager is involved in other aspects of the development process, such as identifying projects, arranging contracts and financing, developing a project team (i.e., architecture, tradespeople, vendors, etc.) and managing external and client relationships. Except in Boston and Year One in San Francisco, the various project development roles were not clearly assigned or considered. As a result, the programs experienced serious problems in getting projects to the point where young people had projects well matched to their training needs unless staff happened to have had prior experience. Chapter 4 will discuss this set of issues in more detail.

A few roles were unique to particular programs. For example, Boston, by the end of the demonstration in 1993, had a development function: a person whose responsibility it was not only to look for sources of financial support for the basic program, but also to develop ideas into initiatives for presentation to foundations and corporations. YouthBuild Boston was very successful at this function. No other program came close to Boston in expanding support and in developing and testing new ideas. San Francisco had success in the first year but lost support due to the director's overconfidence regarding the likelihood of future funding. In other programs, fund-raising was done either by the executive YouthBuild program director with assistance from YouthBuild USA or by the sponsoring organization in which YouthBuild was imbedded. Again, Boston was an exception. The Boston program showed expanding development capacity, not unlike a young CDC that would not only raise funds to support core expenses and development projects, but would seek funding for new program elements to support unfunded aspects of its mission. None of the other groups would be successful over the long run at generating support for expanding the YouthBuild envelope.

The local funding and support environment in which YouthBuild demonstration programs operated varied considerably. While each program received some initial funding from national foundations through YouthBuild USA, ultimately, groups had to tap into local sources for sustained support for most of their resources (i.e., cash, access to programs, CDBG funding teaching resources, buildings, etc.). The figure on the next page outlines the major sources of funds and the extent to which demonstration programs were successful in getting support.

Figure 2 presents a summary of the type of support each program could draw on and illustrates the status of Cleveland, Tallahassee and San Francisco as cases of programs that never had strong local, private, flexible support (Cleveland), public support (San Francisco) or deep support (Tallahassee). Boston and, to some extent, Gary, by contrast, had strong and consistent support. In cases where there was insufficient support, the related problems prevented the full development of the program. In cases where flexible support was sustained, the programs were able to move forward. The problems they experienced were unrelated to the availability of core resources. The reader will note here and will see in other chapters, that none of the programs had enough resources, and nearly all faced the problem of limited flexibility in the use of money.

A second variation in a typical organization is that Boston, Gary and San Francisco reserved staff roles or internships for one or two young people per year after they had completed the program. There were several reasons for adding time to the YouthBuild experience in some communities. Extending the program for the extra year was done in recognition of the fact that one year is not enough time in the program for many young people who have so much to learn in order to join the mainstream. The programs wanted to keep young people on a lifeline to YouthBuild while they searched for a job. Idleness

Figure 3.2

Local Resources and Their Utilization by Demonstration Programs*

Sources/ Programs	Boston	Tallahassee	Cleveland	San Francisco	Gary
Private and Community Foundations	yes	limited	yes	yes	yes
Local Government+	yes	yes	limited and with difficulty	no	yes
State Government	yes	yes	no	no	no
Corporate Charities	yes	no	no	no	no
JTPA	yes	no	yes	no	yes, with difficulty
Collaboration with Other Agencies**	yes	yes	no	no	yes

* Reflects significant or ongoing contributions only.

** Excluding clients and sponsoring organizations

+ Includes mainly CDBG funds

** Excluding clients and sponsoring organizations

was a status to be avoided. Some graduates need a way to stay connected to each other (for non-street peer support) and for the counseling resources of the program. The demonstration sites also felt that there was considerable behavior modeling benefit to having graduates involved in the program.

YOUTHBUILD DEMONSTRATION PROGRAMS

YouthBuild Boston

YouthBuild Boston, Inc. was founded in 1990 as a freestanding not-for-profit organization. It was created solely for the purpose of developing a YouthBuild program. The staff and the Board of Directors were wholly focused on YouthBuild. Thisapproach was settled on after the program organizer spent more than 18 months prior to start-up building support for the program. Early program organizers and YouthBuild USA staff met with over 60 Boston groups before deciding that the best course of action was to incorporate a freestanding YouthBuild that would collaborate with local community development groups in the Roxbury section of Boston. From these meetings a Steering Committee emerged. The Steering Committee became the core of the Board of Directors for YouthBuild. By the time YouthBuild was incorporated, broad awareness and support at the grassroots level and in the public and foundation sectors had been created. This pattern of organizing a freestanding YouthBuild followed in San Francisco and in non-demonstration YouthBuilds.

The Boston program was able to raise considerable flexible resources. The City contributed over $200,000 in the first year. YouthBuild Boston raised private funds, attracted corporate contributions and received support from various other local sources. It raised enough money to cover its budget in the first two years without anything more serious than minor cash flow problems. More importantly, its funding imposed virtually no serious constraints on its program design or implementation. It continues to have strong financial support and has gained new support for additional program enhancements.

The Boston program was successful in recruiting an executive director able to lead the program through start-up and implementation. Jackie Gelb was first interviewed for the position of national Technical Assistance Coordinator for YouthBuild USA and worked part-time for them before taking over full-time as the Boston program head. For three months she split her time between learning the national model, assisting programs in other cities and laying the groundwork for a Boston program. This way of starting up was excellent in helping her learn the model and build strong connections with the national office.

Gelb came to the program with experience in planning, fundraising, managing the day-to-day organizational complexity, making judgments about program and political relationships and implementation in general. She had never been an executive director before but she had nearly a year to develop and plan the YouthBuild Boston.

She had three features that were critical: relevant organizing experience across the range of constituencies (to help her develop the program), sufficient, if not extensive, management experience (to run the program), and commitment to the program model. She also had one year more than others to develop the program before the spotlight appeared. None of the other program directors would have quite this mix of personal traits and fortuitous circumstances.

While Gelb was dynamic and experienced, her inexperience in handling certain personnel matters and her forceful personality created some difficulties in team-building during the first year. This did not affect program quality. Gelb's openness to assistance, her commitment, judgment and success in key areas offset the initial problems. A solid team developed and remained stable throughout the demonstration. Ordinary staff changes were neither disruptive nor reflective of organizational fragility.

Collaboration between the Boston program and the national office was extensive. This is because Jackie Gelb worked for both agencies and because the national office is in the Boston area. Dorothy Stoneman, head of YouthBuild USA, participated in local program organizing, attended many key meetings and served on both the Steering Committee and the Board of Directors of YouthBuild Boston. Two other national staff people also served on the Boston Steering Committee and Board.

The Boston program got off to an early start in 1991-92 giving it a start-up year before this documentation project began. In addition, the extra year meant Boston had a longer period of experience on which to draw in making year-to-year improvements. The novelty of the YouthBuild idea and the early efforts to gain support in the Boston program made it possible to put in place a strong base of local support. The extra year may not be decisive. While Boston had an extra year to refine good systems, an extra year for other programs could have revealed strengths or weaknesses.

The construction project for the 1992-93 cycle was the gut rehabilitation of a small building at 1900 Washington Street in Boston. The building had been owned by the City. YouthBuild was designated to rebuild it to be housing for homeless YouthBuild enrollees and for program space. Because this came during a time when support in Boston for community-based development was still very substantial, YouthBuild was able to get significant support from the City for the rehabilitation project. Other support came from corporate sponsors and a national foundation (Kresge).

With respect to staffing, Boston maintained high quality staff throughout the demonstration. Extensive and relevant experience not only characterized the director as noted above but other staff as well. The development team included project management consultants, development consultants, architects and support professionals, including legal and fundraising. No other YouthBuild site built such a strong support team that not only helped the program in the specific projects, but also became willing and active local boosters.

The construction management operation was coordinated by the YouthBuild construction manager who had more than 20 years experience in private construction and development and had worked as a project manager for a private firm in the Boston area. The construction manager was capable and experienced in all aspects of a process that covered the range from selecting and packaging projects to articulating project requirements to managing the training of YouthBuild participants in construction skills.

The budget for YouthBuild Boston was larger than for any of the other demonstration programs, at more than $1 million in 1992-93. Boston has been able to maintain this support throughout. However, like other programs, they did experience from time to time problems with the flow of cash and financial operations. Unlike some sites, the problems in Boston were frictional and not structural.

Midway during the demonstration Boston increased its staff capacity in financial management. As the program grew and became more complicated, it was able to do substantially better in all aspects of financial management. It attracted funding that was substantially more flexible than that for other demonstration programs. However, like most YouthBuild programs, this flexibility was never sufficient. Nevertheless, Boston developed staff capacity in fundraising and was able to overcome all major resource problems.

YouthBuild made extensive efforts to work with the local nonprofit sector. An early collaborative initiative with Urban Edge (a local CDC) was ill-fated. However, they were able to work out an arrangement with the Dorchester Bay Economic Development

Corporation. Problems with communication and coordination produced dissatisfaction that made the arrangement short term. In Boston and elsewhere, efforts to force collaboration that would graft youth training/education initiatives onto increasingly sophisticated development organizations proved impossible. While the missions of the two types overlapped, their agendas for implementation did not.

YouthBuild staff was able to combine commitment to the YouthBuild vision and significant professional experience in program management and development to operate and implement development projects without whatever benefit a CDC might potentially have provided. With all of these staff assets, Boston was able to avoid many of the project related difficulties that would show up in sites lacking such experience and staff depth.

With the benefit of one year more than other sites, the YouthBuild Program in Boston had sufficient time to reflect on its program experience and make adjustments. Over the course of the demonstration, which from its point of view, started in 1991 (not 1992-3 as in other sites) Boston made several improvements. First, staff recognized that many of the young people coming into the program had more serious personal problems than they first imagined. A number of students experienced trauma, became homeless, faced serious family problems or were injured in street violence. More than the staff anticipated, some of the young people accepted into the program were not ready for the discipline the program required.

Hence, YouthBuild would institute a "mental toughness" orientation program in its second year of the demonstration. It was designed to help students understand the mainstream work force they were being prepared to join and to give them tools to deal with what they found. This mental toughness regime is an intensive interactive program that gets young people to examine issues of self image, explore fears of success (or failure), and reflect on past experience with education and other obstacles. The program had to identify specific strategies for addressing these issues, including goal setting, conflict resolution, problem-solving strategies and other relevant personal skills. The strategies in the mental toughness model were shared with other sites as time passed.

YouthBuild built this "mental toughness" into the program throughout the year when they realized the need for more counseling. They increased from one counselor to two counselors per cycle. Nationally, the YouthBuild USA would come to recommend this level as a norm, though not all of the other YouthBuild programs were able, or had the financial flexibility, to fully implement it. (A second counselor in other programs might have other duties such as placement or outreach.)

YouthBuild Boston also came to the conclusion that one year of participation in the program would not be sufficient to achieve the significant personal transformation that many young people needed. YouthBuild Boston set out to develop a program to work with young people in the year after their initial participation in the program. This extra year emphasized counseling and support, opportunities for continued contact with staff, continued support for the GED program for young people who did not complete their GED in the first year and placement services.

The second year also emphasized opportunities for "graduates" from the past year to participate with new program enrollees in an "intern" status that allowed these veterans to model the personal skills learned from the program. Interns also assisted staff in the classroom, library and construction sites. They helped out in various departments, the front office, in peer counseling and other activities. By giving a number of young people roles in the program, YouthBuild provided additional opportunities for reinforcing the personal development that started in Year One.

There had always been an issue among program staff in YouthBuild about whether the construction industry was the only appropriate or the best venue for training young people. While the YouthBuild demonstration never wavered from construction as the principal venue for training, YouthBuild Boston did experiment with an environmental service program. In collaboration with a number of community groups, YouthBuild provided opportunities for young people to receive training in positions with the Boston Conservation Services. These activities trained young people to provide a variety of insulation, conservation and restoration services. This pilot program for 12 young people in 1992 not only became a major activity for YouthBuild but demonstrated that the YouthBuild program need not be built entirely around construction. (San Francisco, where construction training venues were difficult to create, also considered, but never formally established, a program to explore other areas.)

More than any other program, Boston proceeded through the demonstration with a clear vision, developed staff, deep and strong local support and continuing commitment to improving and refining the program. Because the program was fundamentally well-administered, energy could be put into developing new ideas and testing variations. Boston was able to develop the environmental program, not as a replacement for the model but as a demonstration of its flexibility. They were able to add staff to build the new counseling modalities and other schemes to improve retention without inappropriate "creaming". They were able to find ways to connect, albeit informally, to the community development initiatives -- clean-up efforts, anti-violence and anti-drug campaigns, etc.

None of the other programs were able to establish the level of maturity as demonstration programs that Boston achieved. One might be tempted to view this as a function of Boston's sophistication in community development compared to some other cities. However, both San Francisco and Cleveland have a similar reputation as cities with strong community-based development and service organizations. However, none of that local capacity would be tapped in the YouthBuild demonstration in those cities the way it was in Boston.

More than any other site, the Boston program hired staff that was not encumbered with conflicting commitments. The program was built and operated as a team that had excellent leadership from the executive director and from David Lopes, the construction manager. The program's development has been an expression of the YouthBuild philosophy. It has conducted experiments to test ways of improving the effectiveness of YouthBuild for young people and of applying YouthBuild to fields other than construction. Boston is an organization that learns from its past and self-consciously seeks to incorporate the lessons in successive program cycles. More than any program, Boston demonstrated the potential of YouthBuild. It created a long shadow for other groups. Unfortunately, other cites' shadows covered more difficult terrain.

YouthBuild San Francisco

YouthBuild San Francisco, like Boston's program, is a freestanding organization created solely for the purpose of developing a YouthBuild program. A local planning committee led by Leroy Looper volunteered more than two years of their time to develop support for the program. Looper is a veteran activist who used his experience to mobilize foundation and political support for an effort to help young men who found themselves uneducated, unemployed and often on the wrong side of the law. (Looper would serve as Chair of the YouthBuild Board until 1993 when the board failed to support his bid to remove the executive director.)

The groups involved in the YouthBuild planning process had originally sought the sponsorship of a pre-existing organization. They decided, after weighing the pros and cons of being part of another entity, to incorporate a freestanding YouthBuild organization.

Once this decision was made, the planning committee, with strong support from the foundation community, was able to assemble funding and to hire a staff.

The organizing effort was very successful. While San Francisco received little cash support from the public sector (for example, from Community Development block grants), the sentiments of public officials were very positive. They offered informal support and promises of cooperation. The local community of nonprofits active in housing development were positive as well, though they made it clear they were not interested in incorporating a youth program into their organizations or job training in their construction projects.

After some initial union turf concerns (and fears that these young people would take increasingly scarce union laborer jobs), organizers were able to win at least very general support from the union. A union leader was on the board and union brass helped the program gain commitments from major contractors to provide training positions at construction sites and placement opportunities. The funding community committed generous support for the first two years. Funders in San Francisco gave the program more flexibility than was available to any of the other demonstration programs. The support up front was so significant that the program did not have to deal with the local stakeholders the way program directors were forced to in other cities, where the process of assembling resources was also the means by which the broad support for the program and its niche in the community were negotiated. However, the failure to cultivate supporters and seek additional support (including support from government) hampered and eventually stalled the program.

Assembling funds that could be used flexibly was not a problem. The flexibility insured that the demonstration would be hampered by neither the lack of funds nor by tight restrictions on their use. This would be an early advantage for the program.

However, the lack of diversity in funding would be a handicap in the second year. Public and corporate support were conspicuously absent at a time when, in other cities, they were the core support.

The San Francisco YouthBuild was not associated with any neighborhood; its offices were in a commercial area just outside the core city. It was not tied to any community-based organization. Youth came from all over the city and projects had no connection to, nor visibility in, any neighborhood. While the program gathered support from various sources, it had no deep sponsorship in an area or from any group. Of all the demonstration sites, San Francisco was the one most isolated from community anchors.

Because young African-American males would be a major client group, early organizers, including Lopes, sought a black program director. They found Richard Henry who, while not experienced as a youth program director, did bring some impressive credentials that seemed critical to managing a complex program -- from resource development to a good rapport with young people. Henry had been a teacher, researcher, conflict-resolution trainer, fund-raiser and consultant to youth programs. When hired, he had recently moved to the Bay Area from Oklahoma. He would go on initially to build what observers felt was a strong organization. His own newness to the Bay area and the lack of a perceived need to build community support or to be connected to any turf would initially be sources of flexibility. However, time would show this lack of connection to be a serious weakness. What appeared as a strong organization actually had few roots or branches. As problems arose and resources became scarce, no one was both willing and able to mobilize a successful rescue effort. This institutional isolation appeared to derive almost entirely from the style of the executive director, a style which would be a problem for the board and for YouthBuild USA.

Collaboration between program organizers and the national office of YouthBuild was steady and strong (though not close) from the beginning. National YouthBuild staff attended early planning and funding meetings and consulted with staff throughout. YouthBuild USA also provided formal and informal technical assistance--in organizational development, fund-raising and program development.

San Francisco at the outset was close to the prototype of YouthBuild, except that the housing market and development environment in San Francisco required a different relationship between the program and the construction site. Lacking cheap houses to rehabilitate because San Francisco is a high-cost city for housing, the program was always searching for alternative ways to provide young people with on-site construction training experience.

The inability to obtain traditional sites (i.e., housing units) required modification of the training component. The work sites that they developed consisted mostly of nonresidential projects, mainly in commercial buildings and in institutions. San Francisco's approach also included the development of cooperative agreements with contractors who would take a small number of YouthBuild participants as workers on housing projects. YouthBuild would work out agreements with a limited number of such developers but never enough to involve a significant number (maximum = 7) of the trainees at any given time. As a result, the training experience consisted mostly of the young people working on nonresidential construction projects. The work was often little more than demolition and other labor tasks, and not tasks undertaken as a series of progressively more complex training. Young people did develop new skills, but these were fewer than were hoped for.

For San Francisco, completion of the GED would have high priority. The Executive Director's philosophy was that for the large number of young people who had criminal records, simple job experience would not be enough to help them in the highly competitive labor market in San Francisco. The program emphasized the GED more consistently than other sites and had some success in getting GED completion among trainees who stayed with the program.

The financial problems that faced YouthBuild in San Francisco were not its only, or even most serious, problems. As a freestanding organization, it had the full responsibility for its management, including the management of relations between board and staff. These relations would deteriorate in the second year: the executive director did not work with the board or YouthBuild USA in reinforcing or expanding support; there were personality clashes; poor organizational leadership and stewardship are evident. There is no reason to believe that San Francisco would not have been supportive of such a program. Funders expressed high hopes for the program and their expectations were met in Year One. Their support simply was not cultivated.

The program produced good educational results in the first year. However, this would not be enough given the problems above. Lacking community roots, sustained program support, successful signature building projects, or the reputation-building experience that a completed project can provide, the program, by mid-summer 1993, went into an organizational free fall.

San Francisco YouthBuild no longer exists. There was no effort by local funders to revive it. YouthBuild USA disaffiliated. Two new groups arose to take up the challenge.

YouthBuild Cleveland

In Cleveland, Ohio, the YouthBuild demonstration was sponsored by the United Labor Agency (ULA). ULA is a not-for-profit organization sponsored by the AFL-CIO and United Automobile Workers (UAW) to provide social services to Cleveland area members. The YouthBuild program was incorporated into this existing organization and its solidly union culture. The ULA already had a youth program division that provided GED training, summer jobs and opportunities in construction training.

The early success in organizing YouthBuild in Cleveland resulted from the efforts of Joe Ventura, a City Council aide, who was able to gain local and national attention to the possibility of organizing YouthBuild in a union setting. Ventura went to the ULA, which accepted YouthBuild in theory and hired him to develop and run it as a unit in its organization. Additional funding from JTPA was forthcoming. Fitting YouthBuild into the JTPA funding cycle and regulations, however, would create major problems for the program. Problems with JTPA were faced by other groups as well and are discussed in more detail below.

Raising funds for the program was not easy and funding agreements had significant consequences for implementation. The JTPA agreement was a major contract that framed the program. It imposed an emphasis on short-term intervention and rapid placement for large numbers of young people, distorting the YouthBuild design which aims to give intensive, integrated and longer-term support to a small, unified group of young people. In the 1992-93 program year, YouthBuild Cleveland was expected to "serve" 153 young people, only 28 of whom would have the opportunity to stay for the full YouthBuild cycle, and even that cycle was abbreviated due to funding pressures.

The program separated the basic education component from the construction training, passing large numbers of young people through the basic education. Only a few of these moved into the construction training. This design variation from the YouthBuild model was caused not only by JTPA funding, but also by the union concern that GEDs be obtained prior to entering construction training.

The YouthBuild program in Cleveland had three main elements: basic education, in-classroom construction skills training and on-site construction work. Youth leadership was built into the overall program according to this Cleveland model: they had a full-time leadership person and used Fridays as the time to focus on leadership. It was not a strong separate element. The other elements occurred in sequence rather than simultaneously. Each element was funded as a separate program and had some staff who were in only one or two elements. Only the Director was part of all three. This odd arrangement made it difficult to build staff unity or create program coherence. Large numbers of young people entered the program; only a few finished. This compounded the difficulty of building a cohesive group of young people with common goals and a common experience.

The above description is not that of a program that fits the YouthBuild model. For the national office, it was a "judgment call" whether the constraints, mostly known in advance, were severe enough when viewed in 1991 to deny participation in the demonstration. Knowing the potential problems, the national office chose nevertheless to include the Cleveland program in the demonstration for several reasons. They felt some of the problems could be overcome. They also felt that having several types of program settings would be an important element of variation for a national demonstration. They assumed that negotiations would reduce or eliminate serious deviations from the basic YouthBuild model. This faith turned out to be overly optimistic.

YouthBuild USA had recruited the United Labor Agency to sponsor YouthBuild in Cleveland because of a desire to have union involvement in the national YouthBuild movement. However, the Cleveland YouthBuild's experience with the union underscores how important it is for YouthBuild organizers to anticipate the level of cultural and procedural change existing organizations may have to undergo in order to implement YouthBuild in settings that unions control. The attitude of key people in the United Labor Agency was mixed in the sense that there were some in the agency who wanted to make YouthBuild work and who were willing to adapt to fit the model. However, there were others, in construction management, for example, who were not committed to young people or to the program and who refused to conform their activities to the requirements of YouthBuild. They both actively and passively resisted implementation. In such an environment, regardless of the formal top-level commitment, there is little reason to have faith that the program will obtain the deep staff commitment that is critical to effective communication.

The national office's reports and our assessment underscore the importance of hiring a program director with the requisite skills and experience to meet the challenge presented by this program and the local context in which it is implemented. Joe Ventura, the initial organizer, moved into the role of Director once the ULA agreed to sponsor YouthBuild. As an organizer and fund-raiser Ventura was successful in persuading the union to go along; YouthBuild USA backed him up. However, Ventura was not as successful in building support from youth and community development organizations (CDCs). His tenure was marked by constant clashes with the union's regular staff who were not initially or fully committed to the program. His lack of credibility with staff and his ineffectiveness at overcoming problems led to his departure. While Ventura was an earnest and progressive young man, he lacked the experience, temperament and skills required in the position. It is not clear in retrospect that the job was do-able, being set within such a strong and rigid organization. The ULA was used to working in a trade union culture.

YouthBuild's isolation from the Cleveland CDC community would be a problem as the program sought to obtain construction projects and build local support. The ULA is part of the labor and social welfare network in Cleveland. This is separate from the strong network of community development corporations which have the preferred access to development resources needed to undertake and subsidize housing development. As a result, the Cleveland program did not have easy entry into, or strong support from, this group. While YouthBuild did develop a relationship with one CDC in 1993-94, this was not soon enough or strong enough to help YouthBuild with the problems they experienced and the limited construction output (on cosmetic rather than gut rehab) that eroded support.

Ventura was replaced in 1991 by David Burch, who at the time was head of the union's summer youth jobs program. The structural problems Ventura faced would continue, though Burch's effort did seem to produce small victories from time to time, for example, some obstinate staff were let go. However, actual union commitment remained a problem. While YouthBuild was not opposed, it's roots outside union circles were not deep. The JTPA process frustrated basic operations, outreach, and overall effectiveness.

YouthBuild never emerged formally into the kind of coordinated model that other demonstration sites would reflect. The program was never able to offer an integrated education and training regimen. There would never be enough opportunities on a training site to meet the minimum requirements of the YouthBuild demonstration of 25 to 30 students. The overall program would involve a large number of students. Few of them would reach the stage where they would have the significant classroom and on-site construction training experience expected in the YouthBuild Program. Instead, they would be graduated from the program after shorter periods to meet JTPA timing and placement goals.

Cleveland had other difficulties. In the area of staffing, the major problem was that the YouthBuild program director was not able to select staff or fully direct the activities of the staff. Staff's style with youth, as well as their competence, loyalty, and strong union (not youth development) ethic would be constant problems. They were forced to keep a construction manager for a year and a half who showed no interest in the program and worked actively to sabotage it. While he was eventually let go, this person was in place for two thirds of the demonstration.

The YouthBuild Program operated with a very small budget of just over $250,000 in FY94. This did not include some of the administrative costs associated with YouthBuild and included only the cost of education, counseling and training staff. It did not include the wages for young people, site training costs or other activities outside of, and not accountable in, YouthBuild funding. Because the program was embedded in the large ULA organization, it was difficult to disentangle these additional financial contributions to the program.

Despite the fact that Cleveland has plenty of housing in need of rehabilitation, the Cleveland program found it difficult to obtain decent training projects. Projects were of the wrong scale, or YouthBuild was unable to obtain flexible resources or relief from the strictures of JTPA to take advantage of opportunities that were presented. Furthermore, CDBG funds that would have been critical to supporting the cost of housing rehabilitation were allocated through the political system by city council members from various ward areas. YouthBuild was a citywide program and, therefore, it was at the end of everyone's patronage queue. YouthBuild lacked a substantial connection to local politicians, although some support existed early and was lost under Ventura. Eventually it was able to work out an arrangement with one CDC to do some work on its projects. Also, after considerable effort, one member of the city council was helpful. This relatively modest benefit came after a protracted effort and was not a panacea for the program's woes concerning projects.

The Cleveland YouthBuild was a citywide initiative. There was some early thought, later abandoned, to include the county as well. Lacking a neighborhood base and having the pressure from JTPA for high enrollments and fast turnover, Cleveland faced the constant problem of instability and disconnectedness from potential constituencies. To go county-wide would have exacerbated the problem of a lack of a neighborhood base. Already, the YouthBuild office was in a remote area, far from day-to-day program and project activities and the areas where most of the enrolles lived. There was none of the camaraderie or sense of focus or vision that existed in programs where young people had something in common with surrounding neighborhoods, as was the case in Boston and Gary.

At the end of the demonstration, the YouthBuild initiative in Cleveland folded. It did not receive a grant from HUD; there were no deep sources of support. Had it received funds, it would have continued, and with a YouthBuild program design. There was quite a noble effort at ULA on the part of David Burch and David Knapp to twist the program design into a YouthBuild design, but it was frustrated by JTPA funding constraints and lack of flexible funding. Some believe if it were not for JTPA and the other constraints, such as the lack of authority to hire and fire, Burch and Knapp could have made it work.

YouthBuild Tallahassee

In Tallahassee, Florida, the YouthBuild Demonstration was sponsored by the Tallahassee Housing Foundation (THF). The THF is a county-wide nonprofit development corporation whose mission is to support volunteers and others in efforts to promote housing rehabilitation for low-income households. YouthBuild's organizers tried other possible affiliations, but found them unacceptable and, after deciding that a freestanding YouthBuild was not practicable, made YouthBuild a program of THF.

Extensive organizing and mobilization preceded the implementation of the program. The YouthBuild organizers were Tom Fisher, a staff person at the Tallahassee Housing Foundation, and Michelle Hartson, then Director of the Florida State Housing Coalition. Their advocacy was actively supported by local nonprofit housing and youth activists.

Florida passed (but did not fund) YouthBuild legislation to support the program. While the YouthBuild program did not have a separate board and its friends and supporters were not formally organized, they did follow and encourage the program's implementation.

Fundraising would be a serious problem in Tallahassee. The city does not have a group of private foundations which could provide the type of critical and flexible resources available in a Boston or San Francisco. The Tallahassee Housing Foundation raised some funds for YouthBuild from the City through the Community Task Force on Crime and Drugs. YouthBuild also received support from the Board of Education in the form of GED teachers and access to instruction at the local vocational school. Dependence on resources from the school system, the timing of commitments and the school opening date forced YouthBuild to start serving youth several months earlier than might have been advisable based on planning and staff readiness. This hurried start-up with less than six months of serious planning was done in order not to lose funding for two important teachers who contributed to the program and in order to assure that official high school credits would be available for the students. (The reader will note that this planning period before start-up was a small fraction of the time that Boston and San Francisco had and was shorter than the full year that is advisable.)

The fundraising effort proved to be neither adequate nor timely. During the demonstration, YouthBuild did not have a consolidated budget. The program was funded through a series of contracts with the Tallahassee Housing Foundation and the school system. Funds included grants from the city of Tallahassee, the School Board of Leon County, YouthBuild USA and the state of Florida. These grants, plus contracts with the Urban League and other agencies, brought resources of about $300,000 to the YouthBuild Program in 1992 1993. Resources available to the program through the Tallahassee Housing Foundation in the form of organizational support were not separately allocated.

The amount of funding available was not sufficient to manage the program, much less plan and design mission-enhancing elements. The program was well into the cycle before it had sufficient funds to finish filling staff positions. The lack of budgeting and financial independence of the program makes it difficult to assess fully the financial situation it faced. However, cash management was a problem, and this was sufficient to make financial viability a critical concern throughout.

The program staff included the usual positions: director, program manager, counselor, construction manager trainer, classroom teacher, etc. However, unlike Boston, for example, the roles were not well integrated. The classroom teachers were employees of the school system. Vocational education took place off site in a traditional vocational education setting. YouthBuild had difficulty putting and keeping a program staff in place to develop integration among these elements. Coordination between the schools and the program was strained in the first year while roles were sorted out. They improved in the second year though the staff in the schools with which YouthBuild interacted did not fully understand or accept aspects of the model relating to adultism or leadership development.

The disjointed staffing plan was the first critical consequence of inadequate funding and insufficient pre-planning. Tom Fisher, the initial program organizer, moved into the role of Director once it was determined that the Tallahassee Housing Foundation would sponsor the YouthBuild Program. The rush to start quickly in order to keep the funding from the Board of Education, especially given the lack of other funding sources, caused the program to start with inadequate management staff. Tom Fisher filled two roles. He was the YouthBuild director and construction manager. (He would also have to serve de facto as program manager.) In Boston and San Francisco these roles had been filled by two or more full-time people.

When Tallahassee hired a program manager after the first demonstration cycle had begun, she worked only 3/4 time due to other commitments. At the same time, the counselor, ordinarily a full-time position, was hired for only half time, with the expectation that the program manager would assist with counseling. The overall result was serious under-staffing and role confusion. The program manager did not work out and left amidst confusion after a few months of protracted staff tension.

Beyond problems caused by lack of timely funding, the staff was racked with other problems. From the beginning, the director was overworked, tensions broke out, personnel matters were not handled well, and critical milestones were not met. Coping took the place of planning. YouthBuild Tallahassee was not a stable program in this critical first cycle. Tom Fisher resigned in early 1993 and was replaced by Curtis Corbin.

Staff problems would continue though team building did start under Corbin, who made some needed staff changes. The young people were well aware of the staff difficulties and were troubled by them. They loved Corbin; his presence and commitment were appreciated by students. YouthBuild USA posted two of its staff members on site for several weeks to help stabilize the program and re-construct it. It was not until several months into the second year that staff stabilized under Corbin's leadership. His undoing would be the difficulties he had with administration.

Part of the support for the demonstration project in Tallahassee came from the state of Florida through funds allocated for initiatives to address problems of youth crime. This fact and the linkage to the school system pushed the Tallahassee YouthBuild to become a dropout retrieval program for young people whose needs were not met by, or who were not willing to accept, the traditional school environment. The program, because of its sources of financial support, had to focus on teens younger than at other demonstration programs. Some of the enrolles were as young as 16; three quarters were 18 or younger; none was older than 21. (In other programs, most of the enrolles were 18 or over.) Chapters 5 through 10 address the role of "readiness" and find that younger teens in YouthBuild are less likely to be ready for it.

While the Housing Foundation was a very respected organization, it was not a traditional community-based development organization. The staff coordinated services to provide home repairs for low-income homeowners. They had an annual budget of about $300,000. They did not have the deep financial or infrastructure support that might have provided offsetting benefits to YouthBuild. They were not developers and they lacked roots in the black community, from which nearly all of the enrollees came.

While the Foundation was very credible as a nonprofit, it is important to note that YouthBuild did not have its own Board. The director of the YouthBuild program was responsible to the director of the Foundation. The YouthBuild program did have a large advisory group. While individuals in this group were helpful, the group was not powerful nor did it play the support role boards normally play. Some members of the advisory board reported that they were under utilized and lacked an avenue for effective input. Once the program was established, the group rarely met, though its members were consulted. There was not a high level of community support and external advocacy for the program. People who in other cities would have been on the board of directors were on the sidelines in Tallahassee. They cited both the lack of a board and the style of the second director (Corbin) as special barriers. The program stabilized when YouthBuild USA helped with on-site staff. However, the structural problems remained.

Phil Jackson took over late in the second cycle. This effort was not in time to change the sagging prospects for the demonstration. Jackson's administration would become fraught with controversy. YouthBuild Tallahassee did not attract the federal funding for which it applied. The program closed. Lack of capable and consistent leadership was the central fatal problem. In three years, the three YouthBuild directors and a parade of other key staff never came together as a team. In addition, the parent organization, with four executive directors during the period, had even more turnover than YouthBuild did. Tallahassee had problems that would make program development difficult under the best circumstances. They could have overcome their city's contextual problems if they could have achieved sound leadership in a sound organizational context.

YouthBuild Gary

YouthBuild Gary is a program of the Tree of Life Community Development Corporation. The CDC was established in 1990 as an outgrowth of the Tree of Life Missionary Baptist Church in Gary, Indiana, which at the time was 12 years old. The CDC is a neighborhood organization committed to an active program and comprehensive development of the neighborhood through the provision of housing and social services. The goal of the CDC is:

> *"...to serve the whole man, to make available home ownership and tenancy opportunities to those individuals determined to be in need regardless of race, sex or religious beliefs."*

For this CDC, YouthBuild is an integral part of its overall strategy. The Tree of Life CDC had initial questions about some aspects of the YouthBuild model, such as the meaning of rhetoric concerning "adultism" and the content of the leadership aspects of the model. After some consideration of what the YouthBuild model actually involved and after being assured that traditional values could be fostered, it became committed to YouthBuild, to involving the youth in the development of the neighborhood, and to a focus on housing that would serve the interests of the local residents. The idea of working on the development of young people as part of community development and the relationship between social service referral and housing development were always strong elements of the CDC's mission. Its development initiative centered on playing a key role in the City's homeless initiative. The notion was that the YouthBuild Program would be a way to provide training opportunities as the CDC developed housing opportunities for un-housed or under-housed families.

The YouthBuild Program was sponsored by the CDC in partnership with the Northwest Indiana District Council of Carpenters, Lakeshore Employment and Training, Inc., the City of Gary, Gary Career Center and the Lilly Endowment.

Each of these players made a major contribution to the establishment of the program. At first the Council of Carpenters gave its blessings, promised to help graduates find jobs and granted one-year credit toward completion of the apprenticeship program to those YouthBuild graduates eligible to join an apprenticeship program. (The program would later lose support from the Carpenter's Union.) The Lilly Endowment was a major funder. Through YouthBuild USA the City of Gary provided local government resources (CDBG); and the Lakeshore Employment and Training, Inc. is the local JTPA agency.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development and the regional Home Loan Bank are the major providers of resources for the CDC's program to provide affordable housing to homeless families. The inventory of housing that the CDC works on is from the stock of "housing disposition" units available to HUD. Under the program, the CDC rehabilitates the housing and provides property management, counseling and referral services to local residents. The CDC's mission calls for some of these families to be converted to homeowners. The aim was that the YouthBuild enrolles, as part of their training, would contribute labor to the housing rehabilitation. JTPA funds would cover youth wages.

A major story for YouthBuild Gary was its difficult relationship with the JTPA Program, which was a major source of financial support. There were disputes with JTPA in Gary about the construction projects on which YouthBuild could work, and this interfered with the provision of hands-on experience for youth. In order to maximize funding, high attendance and minimal attrition were mandated. In order to accommodate these requirements, YouthBuild Gary made a rule that pay would be cut for a trainee whose attendance failed to meet standards. All young people presenting a need profile were not ready for the rigors of the program. Gary was forced to ignore this lesson and to have its enrollment profile determined by JTPA referrals that were not carefully matched to YouthBuild's ideal requirements.

Finally, the JTPA Program would keep YouthBuild Gary on a very short leash. Program requirements for performance were very specific. Each YouthBuild program cycle would have to negotiate with JTPA. While JTPA was not totally inflexible, the chill of rigidity was a constant stress.

By late 1993, the JTPA office in Gary prohibited labor by YouthBuild trainees on some of the projects that the CDC undertook. Problems with JTPA affected other YouthBuild demonstrations as well, in cities such as Denver and St. Louis. The problems persisted and prompted YouthBuild USA to intervene in Washington, DC to gain flexibility. YouthBuild USA was able to achieve some recognition of the program from Washington, but this support in Washington could be translated directly into flexibility in the way that officials at the local level would interpret the regulations. According to one official in Washington,

> *"... the JTPA Program was passed in the early 1980s, and it was a mean-spirited or, shall I say, cheap-spirited bill designed to prevent comprehensive programs for young people at risk and in particular, to prevent work experience programs. If we follow the spirit of the law, YouthBuild was not intended to be funded."*

While there would be varying degrees of flexibility for YouthBuild programs in other cities, JTPA rules would be a continuing source of difficulty in Gary. Boston, on the other hand, worked out a relationship that was more flexible and was able to use the resources from the JTPA Program more effectively than other cities. Cleveland and Tallahassee had more difficulty.

Gary's YouthBuild staff was traditional in the sense that the project director was assisted by a program coordinator, a construction manager, two trainers, two teachers, and a counselor. There was also a secretary/bookkeeper.

YouthBuild in Gary had good and stable staff support in the 1992-4 program years. However, staff changes towards the end of that period created some instability. The loss of union support was an additional source of strain.

Forty percent of the $500,000 annual program budget came from the Lakeshore Employment and Training Partnership which was the local JTPA agency. YouthBuild USA and the Lilly Endowment provided an additional third of the budget. The remaining funds came from the city.

At the end of the demonstration, YouthBuild in Gary continued as a training element within the CDC though not with federal support. Local funders would maintain their support for the Tree of Life CDC organization toward achieving its mission for the community that it serves.

SUMMARY

In this section, we go back to the informal organizing hypotheses presented at the beginning of this chapter.

Executive Leadership

Nothing comes through from the descriptions above more clearly than the significance of executive leadership in the demonstration sites. Each case underscores this point. Boston developed well in a large part because it had incumbents in three top positions who provided stable, consistent, and skillful leadership. In Tallahassee, by contrast, the leadership in YouthBuild changed twice and leadership in the sponsoring organization, the Tallahassee Housing Foundation, changed three times during the demonstration. Other key positions turned over more than once. The relationship between the YouthBuild program and the parent organization was constantly changing.

In the case of San Francisco, the executive director's style was in many ways counter-productive, especially in the critical area of nurturing and deepening external support. While inadequate in this regard, the San Francisco director was very effective in building relationships with program enrolles and in developing the staff and organizational capacity in the early part of the demonstration. In Cleveland, a lack of executive control (the power to hire and fire staff) would eventually limit and then cripple the program director's power to shape and lead the program.

As in any small and new agency or company, the chief executive officer has many roles to play. These include:

- skillful and articulate definition and presentation of the YouthBuild vision;
- negotiation of the local political and institutional terrain;
- recruitment and training (or arranging for training) of staff;
- direct staff team-building and interpreting the YouthBuild model to staff;
- supervision of staff in the development of program components;
- seeking, evaluating, and retaining external help and consultation;
- establishing and managing financial and administrative systems;
- developing trust and credibility as a leader with young people;
- managing crises; and
- assessing problems and using creative problem solving on the items above.

With the exception of Tallahassee, each demonstration site had a program director who was capable of directing the program and who had a period of some success on most of the dimensions cited above. However, only Boston and Cleveland would escape turnovers in leadership that set the program back.

In larger and older organizations, some of these functions were delegated to other staff. Positive inertia, positive presumptions, and institutional memory combine to keep a successful and established program going. When one of these elements was seriously neglected or deficient, the demonstration program suffered.

YouthBuild USA was active, but not aggressive, in working with these directors as they faced the challenges confronting the programs. YouthBuild USA was not pushy even when it was clear that serious problems were emerging. This was done in the spirit of respect for the programs and a desire to avoid micro-management. Directors, however, were usually willing to ask for help, if not always willing to accept the advice. Program boards and committees were not especially successful in compensating for poor leadership.

Consistency with the YouthBuild Model

Consistency with the YouthBuild model is addressed also in chapters 4 and 9. Suffice it to note here that adhering to the model did turn out to be an important aspect of the program. Demonstration sites that developed the program along the lines of the model even with minor variations, and pursued the plan consistently, were rewarded with more positive results over the course of the program. Organizations that had fundamental strength were able to stretch the envelope a bit and experiment with new ideas as Boston did in pursuing non-construction projects. Cleveland, by contrast, was forced to incorporate nonconforming elements, and other programs had to contend with the counterproductive vagaries of JTPA regulations which influenced both enrollee selection and program treatment. By and large, all of the cases showed that consistency was more often associated with minimal or less serious problems and a greater ability to recover from setbacks. Inconsistency between what the model required for construction training and construction projects and what demonstration programs offered to them also illustrates this point. The issues related to construction are detailed extensively in Chapter 4.

Funding Flexibility

The YouthBuild demonstrations had a mosaic of funding. The funding was so complicated that we were unable to document the true cost of the each program. While we received data on revenues and expenses, it was too incomplete and variable in quality to be used. Our best estimate is roughly $15-18K per enrollee per cycle.

Sources of concern in the data include: documented and undocumented in-kind contributions, casual allocation of costs, different fiscal cycles for different sources of funding, inadequate documentation of cost transfers between a parent organization and a YouthBuild program, different patterns in assigning costs associated with construction and training elements and internal problems in accounting and documentation. Programs received funding with varying degrees of restriction and on different fiscal cycles. Some of the funding covered a part of the relevant program elements. For example, the education component might be funded but not the enhanced counseling that staff were expected to provide as part of the YouthBuild model. Some of the funding covered program operations while other grants made no contribution to the YouthBuild infrastructure. Funding for pre-planning, training, etc. were often unavailable from local sources.

YouthBuild Program by design is multifaceted and includes connections among, and multiple roles of, staff in job definitions designed to achieve the various goals of the program. As a result it is difficult to build program infrastructure, to do creative problem-solving and to hire the right mix of staff or consultants without some financial gymnastics. Flexibility is an important management resource. Boston and San Francisco were the most fortunate in this regard. They had early flexible funding. Boston remained that way, while San Francisco failed to maintain the goodwill created initially among Bay Area funders. Over time San Francisco lost not only its flexibility, but adequate funding as well. With its funding flexibility, Boston was able to develop program elements and train its staff in advance, boost its counseling staff, keep key positions fully funded and provide a solid infrastructure for the program.

Cleveland and Tallahassee were somewhat constrained by their relative inflexibility and resource scarcity. This would eventually be Gary's fate as well. In Tallahassee, for example, some positions were funded by two or more sources. One position was vacant for a time after the first cycle started until all of the funding for the position could be obtained. To address flexibility (and cash flow problems), YouthBuild USA had to advance funding to each of the programs at least once during the demonstration. If YouthBuild is to be successful, it has to have a source of flexible resources in addition to the partially or moderately restricted resources for specific program elements.

Community Support

Community support turns out to be more complicated than initially assumed. The literature describing the program focuses on building relationships with the nearby community, seeking legitimacy for the model as an approach to youth development and obtaining favorable reactions from the local funding community. This turns out to be a far too restricted definition of community support. It became clear that community support also includes, among other things, a board of directors that is representative of the stakeholders and incorporates some elements in the relevant communities and constituencies. This includes, for example, representatives from youth development, education, neighborhood development, corporations, other funders and representatives from the union and construction communities. Programs must also seek the blessing of key political players, including the mayor and relevant members of the city council.

Community support also includes coordination or collaboration with institutions and agencies that provide social services to residents in the community or to populations from which enrollees are drawn. Some coordination or collaboration with the local CDC community is also expected. YouthBuild demonstration sites differ in terms of whether and how much they coordinate or collaborate with community agencies. Some degree of articulation seems essential.

All of the programs started with a significant degree of community support. In some cases it turned out to be somewhat shallow. However, in other cases, it was very deep. The critical question for the assessment has to do with whether in the implementation of the demonstration, this community support was sustained, nourished and expanded and whether this support made a difference for program outcomes. Put another way, was support for the YouthBuild demonstration a resource for program development and a resource to address challenges or simply permission to proceed? Boston was the most outstanding example of support as a resource. It built its community support in each of the ways described above and pursued depth and reinforcement to its support. San Francisco had the benefit of this kind of support at the very beginning, but the executive director's style did not compel him to give his full or appropriate attention to this aspect of the program. As a result, support for the program wasted away toward the end of the second program year. Former supporters watched as the program died. They then put their support behind new youth initiatives.

Tallahassee had support, but that support turned out not to be very rich or deep. A succession of executive directors contributed to the withering of the strong support that would be required to sustain the program in an environment which did not have a history of strong support for non-profit or community-based organizations.

Other demonstrations led community support to varying degrees, support strong enough to be a real asset, but not strong enough to help them overcome the difficulties they faced.

Using Technical Assistance

With respect to the question of technical assistance and YouthBuild, all of the demonstration sites were successful and positive in this regard. YouthBuild USA worked with each of the sites. It provided training, convening the groups to help them use peer learning, developed materials, identified and provided consultants, and held conferences and training to reinforce program design and implementation. There were no sites that we could say were exceptions to this rule. All of the sites benefitted or were rescued by this intervention. YouthBuild USA also worked with staff in all positions and at all levels, not just the executive directors. It also worked with enrollees directly and, at times, with boards. YouthBuild USA assisted, often directly, in fundraising, political negotiation, and program planning.

Sites varied on a number of dimensions in ways that relate to use of outside help, depending on how close they were to YouthBuild and the degree to which they informally sought and used the advice. Boston was the clearest in that regard; they took every advantage of help. San Francisco maintained the most distance. They accepted help in some areas and resisted it in others, including areas such as external relations where serious problems mounted.

In terms of the other demonstration programs, they varied depending on the executive director and the particular issue at hand. With respect to the issue of concentrated support (that is, the extent to which the program needed and took advantage of extensive on-site and day-to-day support from YouthBuild USA), Tallahassee and Cleveland would be the most needy in this regard. They both sought it and were able to use the support to the program's benefit. The difficulties they encountered were often not the fault of either the YouthBuild USA or the local program. For example, the difficulties in Cleveland had to do with a mixed level of commitment from the union; in Tallahassee, the issue had to deal with the difficulty of attracting and maintaining good staff.

Sites also varied in availability of local resources and in their ability to use these resources. The Boston and San Francisco programs were in resource-rich communities. Boston YouthBuild was able to obtain and use those resources; San Francisco was not after an initial two years of support. Cleveland is also a relatively rich community in terms of resources. The program had a mixed record of engaging those sources. Tallahassee had relatively little to draw on, a weakness that would have been consequential even under the strongest leadership.

The Role of Program Pre-Planning

The element that we did not predict that turned out to be relatively important was the extent to which programs had time and resources for pre-planning. By pre-planning, we mean the time spent before the students arrived during which the program was able to refine its design, hire and train staff, consult with peers, develop curriculum, identify construction projects and do other things that would make the program ready by the time the first students enrolled. Boston had this opportunity.

Tallahassee never had it and each cycle was associated with catching up, filling gaps, and jerry-rigging program elements. In all of the programs except Boston, construction projects were often undeveloped well into the program cycle. Tallahassee also found its schedule was dictated by the public school calendar. As a result, it did not have time to work out the conflicts between the traditional approach of vocational education and the requirements of the YouthBuild model.

The lessons from this overview of the demonstration programs provide some clear benchmarks for future replications of YouthBuild programs. While program developers have relatively little control over local resources, the traditions of the funders and nonprofit organizations in the community, the density of technical assistance resources, and other factors, there are ways of compensating for differences and shortcomings. Part of the process of program building will have to include helping programs compensate for shortcomings in areas that we have identified in this report as important. Those who provide and receive such help will face some of the programs of program autonomy that YouthBuild USA and the sites faced during the demonstration.

MANAGING PROGRAM AUTONOMY

The implementation by YouthBuild USA of the demonstration created tension around issues of control and autonomy. On the one hand, YouthBuild USA encouraged local programs to be self-sufficient and empowered local sponsors and staff to exercise their judgment in program development. Variation in the implementation of the model was accepted. This was wise, both as a practical matter and as a program developmental matter, since variety would characterize the replication of YouthBuild as a national program.

Autonomy was justified, in addition, as a way to maximize the buy-in and to avoid the inadvertent or passive sabotage that a requirement of strict adherence would stimulate. Groups also needed to have some flexibility in approaching local foundations and agencies which supplied most of the funding and would be counted on in the successive years. Their was also a sense that local funders wanted some flexibility to claim ownership. Finally, YouthBuild USA advocated empowerment of youth; therefore, extending it to local program directors seemed appropriate.

Although YouthBuild USA encouraged sites to exercise autonomy, it was also pressed to give strong direction to make sure that what developed locally in the demonstrations would in fact reflect the YouthBuild model. The national office had the responsibility to national foundations that paralleled the commitments local sites provided to local funders. Indeed, YouthBuild USA encouraged communication between local and national funders and even facilitated many of the connections. While the point was made that not all YouthBuilds needed to look exactly alike, they nevertheless needed to be transparently YouthBuild.

The pressures at the sites varied on a number of dimensions. Groups in some cities wanted to fund YouthBuild within existing organizations; others funded new entities. Some wondered why there was such pressure to emphasize leadership and a youth policy committee as a part of the program structure since they were not used to granting discretion and "power" to young people. Programs varied in the specific age group on which they wanted to focus; within the range of 16-24 year old, some wanted to work with younger people and others with older youth. Some sites wrestled with local policies and the vagaries of JTPA and the local block grant program, others steered clear or worked out flexible deals. Programs tried to contrast and differentiate themselves from other local programs and to conform themselves to the requirements of their local turf.

In all of this, tension persisted between what national wanted and what local programs sometimes developed. In most cases these tensions were worked out. The listing of these tensions is not meant to suggest that the tone was negative in the relations between YouthBuild USA and the local sites. Indeed, only in San Francisco would a negative undertone noticeably characterize the relationship. Even in San Francisco this did not, at least initially, affect the development of what appeared to be a strong program.

The issue of autonomy showed itself as a problem when tensions led to some of the following situations.

1. It was clear from the very beginning that working with the labor union in Cleveland might require deviations from normal procedures and constraints on the autonomy of the YouthBuild program's director. YouthBuild USA took the view that certain variations in procedures would be useful experiments. This included putting the GED preparation entirely before the beginning of the construction training. However, constraints on the ability of the YouthBuild director to hire and fire staff, especially staff who had strong union ties, posed problems that were difficult to overcome. The greatest problem was that it prevented the program from establishing the level of respect for youth from all of the staff that YouthBuild USA regards as a key quality of the program.

2. YouthBuild was just one program within the Tallahassee Housing Foundation. While the Foundation was supportive of YouthBuild, the fact that the program was imbedded within an existing organization meant that it did not have its own board, community support or executive leadership. Further, the director of the YouthBuild program had to answer to the Foundation. The decision to support the Tallahassee program raises the question of how to structure a program within an existing organization to maximize the chance for the new initiative to thrive. YouthBuild USA provided considerable assistance to the

Tallahassee program but this was after it had agreed to an arrangement where YouthBuild was embedded within a nonprofit in a city where nonprofits are weak. Among the primary lessons that YouthBuild USA learned from these experiences are that even when YouthBuild is embedded within a parent organization, the director of the YouthBuild program needs the full support of the parent organization's leadership, the power to hire and fire and the authority to manage his or her budget.

3. There were serious differences in style and perspective in YouthBuild San Francisco versus the national office of YouthBuild. Both YouthBuild San Francisco and the national office tried hard to minimize any conflict. Over time, however, the situation in San Francisco deteriorated to the point that YouthBuild USA was unwilling and probably unable to help reconstruct the relationship between the executive director and the network of local supporters, board members and funders, that the program would have needed to survive.

4. YouthBuild USA did not insist that groups develop schemes for dealing with anticipated cash flow problems, problems that were predictable based on the earlier discussion in this section of the report. All of the programs had financial problems to some degree. YouthBuild USA did offer technical assistance to sites with the most serious problems (Tallahassee, San Francisco and Gary), but there was too little insistence or it came too late to avoid problems resulting from budget shortfalls or poor financial management. YouthBuild USA's ability to influence

program performance by controlling the disbursement of money was not used consistently. Programs faced financial difficulty and received cash disbursements before relevant performance or organizational milestones were reached.

These difficulties of autonomy were significant, but they were not fatal. Indeed, a good deal was learned from them. They were contained and managed by frequent consultation between YouthBuild USA staff and local staff, regular meetings, visits, telephone conversations and by the cooperative style of the national staff. Much of what YouthBuild USA learned is reflected in the guidelines that YouthBuild USA prepared towards the end of the demonstration.

CONCLUSION

At the end of the demonstration period, YouthBuild Boston would be the only demonstration site to receive federal YouthBuild funds. Tallahassee and Gary would continue as replication sites but without federal support. Their applications for federal funds were not approved but they continue with local support. San Francisco and Cleveland would no longer offer YouthBuild programs. Other cities not part of this demonstration would also mount and continue replication.

The programs were able to complete the demonstration and generate important lessons to be learned for replication. The reader should not draw the conclusion from San Francisco and Cleveland, and to a lesser degree from Gary and Tallahassee, that YouthBuild does not work. The data in the chapters that follow show considerable impact even though the organizational problems highlighted in this chapter were serious. The lesson here is that careful planning, good leadership, good staffing, a supportive funding environment and a responsible implementation of the model lead to a Boston-type YouthBuild. Programs lacking these features had problems, but nevertheless produced valuable opportunities for development to many of the youth whom they served. The value of the problems that sites experienced is that they provided important lessons from which future sites can benefit.

YouthBuild USA itself gathered considerable experience from these demonstration sites. Staff were intimately involved in all the struggles that are described in the chapter. YouthBuild USA witnessed and learned from the growing pains, saw, aided and revised management of operations and guidelines, and restructured aspects of the model.

At the outset of the research, the Boston and San Francisco programs seemed similar. Both were freestanding and independent programs, both had impressive and committed executive directors and both started with strong support from influential stakeholders in their respective cities. In San Francisco, however, ties to the local city were not nurtured well and the program did not survive the resulting stress. The program never achieved its full promise.

The organizations in Tallahassee and Cleveland found themselves struggling within existing organizations onto which they were appended. Although each program had some sources of strength and protection, they were limited by their environment in ways that their parent organizations were unable or unwilling to help them overcome. The organizational grafting did not heal and the necessary internal and external development were forestalled.

Cleveland never really was a YouthBuild and this was acknowledged by YouthBuild USA from the beginning as a risk. The struggle to demonstrate the efficacy of the YouthBuild model in Cleveland was always an uphill struggle. YouthBuild USA wanted to test the proposition that they could build a YouthBuild program within an organization that had a strong identity but not an identity that matched the YouthBuild vision. There was some hope that this could be pulled off in Cleveland where the tradition of unions and CDCs are both strong. The YouthBuild experience in Cleveland suggests that the gap between the interests and cultures may be too strong to be easily bridged and reconciled.

Program dynamics in the five sites notwithstanding, there are important lessons to be learned from the experiences that young people and program staff went through in the projects that the YouthBuild demonstration carried out. These are detailed in the chapters that follow.

CHAPTER 4

THE CONSTRUCTION TRAINING COMPONENT

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this section of the report is to document and assess the construction training component of the YouthBuild demonstration and to draw lessons for the future. This aspect of the YouthBuild model has several purposes. It aims to contribute to the development of YouthBuild participants by:

1. Increasing employability. The young people who go through the program are expected to develop what are, for them, new and improved work habits. These include accepting a daily routine, being on time, following directions, being a part of a team, taking supervision and exercising caution and care in the use of tools and materials. Young people in YouthBuild should learn the importance of these habits through participation in classroom and work-site activities that provide opportunities to practice them. Youth should be held accountable for failures in personal responsibility, and they should be rewarded for showing mastery. For many of the YouthBuild enrolleees who have had only unsuccessful experiences in the world of work, YouthBuild aims to provide a second chance to learn these traits and to correct unproductive behaviors. For enrolleees who have not held jobs in the past, YouthBuild introduces these requisites for success. The significance of these habits of personal responsibility in other settings -- school, family, and YouthBuild participation, for example--is also emphasized.

2. Teaching specific skills. Young people are expected to learn specific skills that they can use in the current job market. The program teaches practical skills for the construction sector and offers a structured setting in which to gain experience in the use of the new skills. The specific skills and the types of jobs the skills prepare youth for are discussed later in the chapter. While there is no certification for construction skills built into the YouthBuild program, site work is expected to be a documented and transparently valuable method for learning marketable skills.

3. Helping young people see and appreciate the value of sustained efforts. Construction is a type of activity that has tangible products that young people can see as a result of their individual and group efforts. The YouthBuild model is designed for young people to see and come to appreciate that discipline and teamwork can produce such tangible results. As a consequence of guidance and support in the progressive attainment of skills, this realization for young people reinforces positive features in other parts of the YouthBuild program.

4. Providing tangible benefits to the community. At the time YouthBuild was conceived, housing was a critical need in urban neighborhoods. Inadequate and run-down housing continues to be a problem in urban communities. Having young people participate in the provision of housing and housing services (i.e., by doing

repairs, etc.) reaffirms that young people can be of value to their community. Positive feedback and appreciation expressed to young people by neighbors according to the model reinforces other features of the YouthBuild program.

These are goals specific to construction training. YouthBuild is not unique in pursuing these and other goals (though few other programs explicitly pursue such a broad range of other goals in addition to these under a single banner). The subsections in this part of the report examine the construction activities and projects. Program outcomes and challenges and this context are also discussed. Finally, we identify lessons that will be important in the replication of the program.

The YouthBuild model requires construction training both in the classroom and as an on-site field activity that contributes to the development of real housing units. The basic education element for the overall YouthBuild program moves young people through basic education courses toward GED certification. Together basic education plus class and site training in construction make for a full-time learning experience for the YouthBuild enrollee. The different elements of each program are designed to reinforce one another, for example, the classroom math lesson connects to the training in construction measurement. The learning in the classroom and experience in the field should lead to satisfaction when jobs are well done, and this should prepare and inspire the YouthBuild enrollee to make a successful transition to the mainstream work force in his or her city.

PROJECTS

In this section we review the projects undertaken by the YouthBuild demonstration sites. We also discuss the ways that these projects did and did not appear to contribute to the achievement of the goals summarized above for the construction and training component of the program. Key information about each site is included in Figure 4.1 below that shows the variety of projects undertaken by YouthBuild sites during the demonstration period. The table includes only major construction projects, omitting a number of small *ad hoc* projects or non construction projects.

These small projects typically were not major investments of time or resources, but often did allow YouthBuild to be a visible service to the host community. All of the programs, for example, made some contribution to the development of their own office or program space. Cleveland built part of a public exhibition in a downtown square as its first project. Tallahassee, Boston and Cleveland all did some emergency repairs or participated in community service activities, and San Francisco developed shop boxes and experimental "box shelters" for the homeless. Tallahassee also built several ramps for elderly residents. Community service is part of the goal of YouthBuild. All sites had group community service activities and participated in neighborhood activities. While these were cited and applauded in interviews, they could not be formally assessed. Several of the programs encouraged but did not require young people to participate as individuals in community service.

All of the programs involved a small number of their young people in public relations, locally and nationally. To the extent they were presented as role models and positive examples, this represents a significant service contribution.

YouthBuild sites adopted small residential properties as their principal projects. San Francisco was the exception since its projects were mainly nonresidential demolition and rehab jobs in rather large structures--commercial buildings, YMCA, etc. Boston did small multi-family projects. Gary, Tallahassee and Cleveland did work on small, single-family houses.

None of the sites made a major contribution to local housing needs in terms of volume. It was unreasonable to think they might, since hundreds or thousands of units were needed, and these programs could handle only very small numbers under the most

FIGURE 4.1
YOUTHBUILD DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS AND RELATED INFORMATION: 1992-1994

PROGRAM	YOUTHBUILD OF BOSTON, INC.	YOUTHBUILD OF SAN FRANCISCO	GARY TREE OF LIFE CDC	CLEVELAND UNITED LABOR AGENCY	TALLAHASSEE A PROGRAM OF THE TALLAHASSEE HOUSING FOUNDATION
ROLES	Sub-contractor to private developer	Sub-contractor to nonprofit and private developer	Owner	Sub-contractor for local nonprofit	General contractor for local nonprofits
TYPES OF PROJECTS	Housing	Office, classroom space; no housing	Family housing for homeless	Various small houses	
TYPE OF WORK	Substantial rehabilitation	Rehab; non-residential	Minor repair and rehab	Moderate substantial renovation	Minor rehab and new construction
NUMBER OF UNITS OF HOUSING	-3-	No units (office and classroom space developed)	14 units as part of overall CDC activity	-1-	One rehab, plus repairs on several; 2 new construction units
PARTNER (IF ANY)	Aborted attempt to work with a CDC. Highly regarded by local community, development community.	None	Part of local government anti-homeless strategy	Local labor union	Local nonprofits and Urban League
COMMENTS	Experience was good; was able to complete several projects, including new offices and new construction possibilities for YouthBuild. Explored non construction projects.	Was not able to do housing because few affordable development opportunities existed in the area.	Effort was part of local strategy to assist the homeless.	Finding a suitable project was a persistent problem.	Minor rehab was near YouthBuild office; new construction was several miles away in a rural area.

optimistic scenario. Moreover, YouthBuild was developing a program to do 1-2 units at a time while local CDCs were being pushed to do projects by the dozens or even hundreds of units. CDCs were discouraged from taking small projects by lenders, funders and government. While YouthBuild was initially offered as a potential contributor to neighborhood housing development and partially justified on this basis, in retrospect it is not a surprise that the volume in the YouthBuild demonstration was extremely modest. Even the relatively large numbers for Gary reflect rather modest repair work spread over a relatively small number of units.

YouthBuild in Boston and San Francisco did not work with a nonprofit partner although they did have helpful relationships with nonprofits. Other nonprofits helped in identifying projects, and they provided referrals and support on projects. Cleveland was associated with the local construction laborer's union, though this was not a major source of help in connection with specific projects or even in general. In Gary, YouthBuild was part of a CDC, which in turn was a major player in the city's homeless initiative. Being part of the CDC provided the program a more direct link to the local housing agenda. This connection with local public policy was by far the exception. While YouthBuild was well known and supported in the other cities, it was not a principle player in the way that the Tree of Life CDC was in Gary.

Only in Tallahassee did YouthBuild undertake new construction. In the second year of the demonstration, the Tallahassee program undertook the construction of two small houses about 10 miles from the city. The houses were substantially completed during the YouthBuild cycle and provided the singular opportunity in the demonstration for young people to participate in the full development process -- from site preparation to finished work.

In all of the other programs, site work occurred on old structures. The major shortcoming turned out to be the extra long time some crews spent on the demolition. The time spend on demolition and the more specific tasks that are associated with renovation rather than building meant that the big picture and the changing tasks associated with new construction were not available to a majority of young people. Except for Boston, all of the programs experienced serious problems in mounting and managing rehab sites.

One goal of this research was to test whether YouthBuild would become integrated into the local CDC community infrastructure so that youth development programs and nonprofit housing development would be linked. It was clear very early in the research that the hoped-for collaboration between the nonprofit development community and YouthBuild would not occur and that it was probably unrealistic to expect it to be anything but a casual and cooperative relationship. Boston, Cleveland and San Francisco all tried extensively but had little success in tying their activities to active CDC projects. In Gary, there was a natural connection because the YouthBuild program was embedded in the CDC. Our site interviews identified a number of factors that explain the lack of a close connection from the point of view of the CDCs.

1. Training is an intensive process that focuses on human development. In the case of YouthBuild, this means on "at risk" youth. CDCs deal with physical development projects. They believe that dealing with human development increases the cost associated with developing and completing housing projects. CDCs view the young people as unskilled and undisciplined. CDC energy goes into packaging the project. Then, they want a professional contractor to relieve them of the worry associated with construction.

2. CDCs are thinly capitalized and have very little flexibility for taking on additional costs such as training. Funders who support the soft and hard costs of nonprofit development are loathe to support the kind of infrastructure associated with YouthBuild, nor are they supportive of such small projects or the potential for delay.

3. Strong CDCs increasingly focus on multi-family housing and avoid small projects. Foundations and financial intermediaries are strong in pushing this pattern of project selection.

4. Training is first a human development activity and therefore is inconsistent with the mission of an organization committed and staffed to do housing development. CDCs rarely have staff with skills of YouthBuild staff to draw out the best in people.

5. A number of efforts in the CDC movement are pushing groups in ways that would be inconsistent with a training collaboration. CDCs are being pushed toward professionalism (in staff and contractors), economic development and development of more complicated projects as part of citywide or area-wide partnerships. Attention to human services is encouraged but mainly as a complement to development and with a focus on residents in housing or family heads.

CLASSROOM CONSTRUCTION TRAINING

In general, classroom construction training at each city followed an outline prepared by YouthBuild USA. The instructors adapted the training curriculum to meet their own project needs, styles and experience. The topics that were covered in the training and reinforced on site included:

- applications of math to construction; construction measurement;
- materials (i.e., types of wood, fasteners, etc.);
- tools and equipment (saws, drills, etc.);
- blueprints and construction documents;
- framing;
- rough and finish carpentry;
- sheetrock hanging, drywall, and painting;
- construction of steps, porches, ramps, etc.;
- roofing; and
- use of specialized tools.

Sites also provided demonstrations in a variety of other topics. Gary, Boston and Cleveland did this in such areas as electrical wiring and plumbing. Tallahassee included preparing the site and foundation work, in connection with its new construction projects. Gary and Cleveland reviewed union-related work site issues which, while not directly related to construction skill training, did relate to how construction work is organized on union job sites. These two sites and Boston encouraged young people to apply for union-sponsored training opportunities.

The curriculum recommended by YouthBuild USA had evolved from the early experience of the Youth Action Program in New York City; later refinements were based on field experience recorded by YouthBuild USA staff and program staff. The classroom activity started with an orientation on tools, safety, materials and overview of construction. It included (for purposes of orientation) blueprint reading and other activities that the young people would observe but not actually do. Sites varied in the degree to which they went beyond the items above. Cleveland gave the most additional exposure though to a smaller number of enrollees. Tallahassee seemed to deviate the least from the list.

Sites varied in how they scheduled the classroom activity. In some cases it all occurred on a single day each week, in others it was spread over two or more days in a week. In some cases classroom activity was appended (at least in part) to site work, and in others, it happened in a classroom setting at YouthBuild. Tallahassee was the clear exception. Construction training was done at a local vocational school. Indeed, the total separation of class work and site work was a problem from the beginning.

As we will see in the discussion below, for several sites, most or all of the first trimester of the cycle was spent in demolition activities so that the typical student would not experience a close and consistent fit between the classroom and on-site activities. More on that later.

The curriculum sometimes briefly covered on-site preparation and foundations, concrete, etc., but these were always offered only as extra information. The actual work in these areas and in other skilled trades was performed by subcontractors or experienced workers.

The reader will note that many of the YouthBuild projects are in fact contracts with clients for the delivery of completed projects. The contract requirements are the same as would apply to a typical nonprofit, with the exception that funds are provided to YouthBuild (instead of a contractor). Standard aspects of project development and project management are obligations of any development. While various ramifications of this are discussed later, an important point here is that youth in training are limited in their capacity to complete projects well and on time. To produce deliverables instructors had to do (or redo) work or to rely on other help. They had to coordinate other inputs. Nevertheless, while selecting and packaging projects was often difficult, groups did reasonably well in terms of completing projects. We found only one case where the sponsor complained about the quality of YouthBuild work. However, we discovered several cases where staff had to step in to do work. Because our site visits were infrequent we cannot say with certainty how often this occurred, nor are we especially surprised.

None of the demonstration sites had certifiable tests for competencies in the areas covered in the construction classes. The classroom exercises and "tests" were used more as markers for teaching, to discover whether young people had reached specific milestones in learning.

Boston and the first YouthBuild cycle in San Francisco were most consistent in their record keeping. Based on site visits, interviews with staff and review of documents, we know that classroom training occurred and that young people received opportunities to use some, if not all, of their training. However, we cannot certify that a certain body of knowledge was learned by individual enrollees. Not everyone, for example, hung a door or laid a square of roofing. Some students did rough carpentry, some were able to do finished carpentry. To the extent that YouthBuild is about employability (as discussed at the beginning of this section and in Figure 4.6), skill certification is not needed. To the extent that claims are made about what young people know and what they can do in a construction job, better tests and documentation will be required.

Looking back at the YouthBuild program model, the time in the program is too short and the program lacks sufficient intensity to expect a high level of skill building in the nine to ten months of a program cycle. This is especially true given that most students in the early months were not fully into the "industry" stage of involvement with the program (see chapter 9) and often they were primarily doing demolition. A replication plan for YouthBuild will be needed to set goals that take closer account of what is possible and therefore what can be certified.

In the YouthBuild model, the construction staff should include at least a construction manager, a vocational teacher and a trainer. The classroom person is a vocational education teacher and operates in that capacity. The site trainer works with groups of young people on site and is an experienced journeyman carpenter. This person does practical teaching, offers supervision and, when necessary, performs certain tasks to insure that projects are completed. In the case of Tallahassee, the vocational education school was the site of the classroom training. Articulation between class and site teaching was not as consistent as on the other sites.

Cleveland and Tallahassee used existing union or vocational school models and teaching programs as starting points. The strong pre-existing cultures in each required some retrofitting that took more than a year to frame, negotiate and implement. As we shall discuss below, the transformation from vocational and union models to YouthBuild was never complete and was actively resisted, especially by the union that never conceded to YouthBuild. In both cases the YouthBuild programs were weak and the other cultures were very strong. YouthBuild in both of these cases had weak, inexperienced or new directors, little financial flexibility (that would have allowed them to buy out), and little in the way of community power that nonprofits sometimes use as a source of leverage against entrenched and mainstream approaches. The Tallahassee director faced serious start-up problems with funding, staffing and organizational relationships. These ways of working--traditional vocational school in Tallahassee and union shop in Cleveland--assumed more academic background than enrollees had. They were rigid in their approach in teaching and were not centered, as YouthBuild requires, on the development of a sense of personal efficacy.

San Francisco, Boston and Gary offered extensive classroom training over which they had substantial control. They worked better -- sometimes seamlessly -- from the beginning and encouraged smoother transition for young people between the classroom experience and on-site activity.

There was considerable variation in the depth and rigor of the classroom construction training components in the demonstration programs. Some, like Boston, demonstrated depth in all dimensions -- orientation, classroom, on-site and placement. Each cycle in Boston improved on the site/classroom experience over the previous cycle. San Francisco and Gary showed similar maturation from the first cycle to the early stages of the second cycle when the overall project component (or program) experienced serious problems. Cleveland's reliance on the union curriculum proved successful, but was not really a test of YouthBuild.

ENROLLEE ASSESSMENT OF CONSTRUCTION TRAINING EXPERIENCE

We have two sources of data on what the young people feel about their construction and training experience in YouthBuild. The first is the Youth Opinion Survey, administered at roughly the fourth and eighth months of the program cycle. Tabulations that related to construction training are included in Figure 4.2, below. The figure is for the 1992-93 program with all sites aggregated. Figure 4.2 portrays a moderate to high degree of enrollee satisfaction with the program. We conclude that this is a fair, albeit general, set of responses.

When programs and cycles are looked at separately and responses at the beginning and end of the cycle are compared, few statistically significant or meaningful differences emerge. The data do show some variation in response to the question, "Do you have what you need to work with?" However, when this variable is placed in context with actual events -- weather and funding-related delays, project transitions, etc. -- it is difficult to interpret the actual meaning of small but statistically significant differences. It appears from the data that comments and responses to survey questions were more related to overall events in the program than to the specifics of construction training. When there were program stability, good relationships and positive events, ratings were high, even when construction project activity was limited or characterized as unrewarding. When there were problems in the program in general, this showed up in feelings about the construction experience. There were no doubt measurement problems as well. Finally, the survey took place at the beginning and the end of the program when feelings are likely to be more positive than at critical milestones where judgments about the curriculum and the site experience are likely to be more pointed.

Another way to look at the meaning and value of the construction and training component is to look at how young people ranked the value of various components of the program. This ranking from the Youth Opinion Survey is included in Figure 4.3 below. Learning construction skills and getting a job in the industry are not ranked high by enrollees. While it is not surprising that attachment to the construction industry is not strong (and need not be), the modest attachment needs to be associated with success -- in project completion and in other ways -- that the young people say is valuable to them. The instrumental values expressed in the figure rated most often as "very important" nearly all center on employability traits -- how to get and keep a job, GED, academic skills, etc. The outcomes in these areas -- GED, placements, etc. -- are discussed in other parts of this report.

The instrumental goals are followed by a group of values that are largely symbolic, albeit important. These include: being part of a positive group, helping the homeless and learning about the history of people of color. Political activity or participation in program policy-making are very important to only a quarter or less of the enrollees.

The survey also explores the factors influencing enrollee attendance. These factors and the percent who rate each item as important is presented in Figure 4.4. The (*) items

FIGURE 4.2

Tabulations From 1992-93 “**Youth Opinion Surveys**”
From YouthBuild Trainees
Program Rating: Construction Site

(The scale for the averages reported this page is: 3=Yes; 2=Sometimes; 1=No)

	Average	**Percent Answering "Yes"**
People care about the quality of our work	2.77	82.42
Supervisors teach us well	2.66	73.48
Safety rules are followed	2.64	69.64
The staff comes on time	2.61	67.22
We are learning a lot	2.61	69.61
Staff build good relationships among the crew	2.58	66.24
It is well run	2.51	56.22
We are treated with respect	2.49	59.09
We have what we need to work with	2.48	57.11
We work steadily	2.47	54.08
We get along with each other	2.47	53.66
We get enough feedback on how we're doing	2.42	58.06
We have a weekly meeting and it's interesting	2.40	55.84
It is well organized	2.28	41.58

Figure 4.3

Importance of Various Aspects of YouthBuild to Trainees: 1992-93

(The scale for the averages reported this page is:
4=Very Important; 3=Important; 2=O.K.; 1=Not Important.)

	Average	**Percent Answering "Very Impt."**
Learning how to keep a job	3.81	85.57
Getting some kind of a job	3.79	85.14
Improving reading and math	3.78	83.00
Getting a GED	3.73	84.71
Getting paid	3.71	80.00
Building housing for homeless people	3.63	71.71
Being part of a positive group	3.58	70.00
Learning the history of people of color	3.56	68.29
Getting a driver's license	3.38	60.14
Learning construction skills	3.24	46.00
Talking with other trainees	3.18	41.43
Getting a job in construction	2.99	40.86
Talking with a counselor	2.96	34.71
Being politically active	2.79	27.86
Being on an advisory or policy committee	2.62	19.14

Figure 4.4

Factors That Affect Attendance

(The scale for the averages reported on this page is:
4=Very Important; 3=Important; 2=O.K.; 1=Not Important)

II. HOW MUCH DO VARIOUS FACTORS AFFECT ATTENDANCE?

	Average	**Percent Answering "Very Impt."**
*I'm learning new skills	3.64	70.29
*I feel successful at the job	3.59	63.00
*I know it's important that we finish on schedule	3.58	65.57
I've decided I always want to be there	3.56	63.71
Someone's counting on me	3.55	69.29
*I know that tools and materials will be there	3.55	67.86
I'll be paid more if my attendance is good	3.54	66.86
I enjoy it	3.46	58.86
I know I'll be fired if I don't	3.36	58.43
I promised someone that I care about that I'll do it	3.36	52.71
I haven't used drugs and alcohol	3.32	62.71
*I like working with the crew and they like me	3.23	44.00
*I like my supervisors and they like me	2.62	45.14
I haven't stayed out too late the night before	3.14	47.14
I know if I don't, I'll be in trouble	3.13	44.14
*I've been selected as a leader by the crew	3.06	39.00
My parents or guardians will be contacted if I don't	2.34	25.00

that are related to the construction component are quite important to the enrollees. Since we did not frame the question to sort out attendance for the construction element from the rest of the program, our interpretation on this point has to be extremely tentative.

ENROLLEE FEEDBACK: IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Although less systematic, the comments from interviews conducted at all sites and at various times during the demonstration are very revealing as statements of how young people feel about the construction training aspect of the YouthBuild experience.

We asked young people what construction skills they learned. The comments that are excerpted below in the students' own words are important for several reasons. We get from their own words a sense of what they find salient in the experience. We pick up on their frustrations as well as their understandings regarding ways that new skills will help them the mainstream world of work.

In reviewing these comments, the reader should be mindful of several caveats. First, these are snapshots, taken at different points in the cycle, from different programs and from enrollees who had different degrees of satisfaction with the program -- from gratitude and enthusiasm to disappointment and anger. The comments should therefore be viewed as formative and not sumative. These pieces in the mosaic of enrollee feelings have to be viewed against the systematic survey and data summarized elsewhere in this report.

> Question: What types of tools have you learned to used here that you didn't know how to use before?
>
> Response: Pry bar, drill, saw, the sander drill, the sandpaper drill and, well, they show you how to use a hammer properly because some people hold it the wrong way and stuff.

****

> ...There's a saw, there's a power drill, hammers, nails, the big mallets, things like that.

****

> . . . It's not a jack-hammer, it goes through the wall. It breaks up the cement, the bricks. It's a hammer drill. A hammer drill. You know? You got that down, (?) [staccato sound effects] breaking things up. Man, there's not too many tools that you never seen before, you never used before. It's basically three or four. One thing I hadn't used before was the hammer drill. I'd used an electric saw before and a regular saw and hammer and stuff like that, so . . .

We probed regarding the lessons learned about construction:

> Question: Alright. About the construction stuff, what do you know how to do now that you didn't know how to do before you were in YouthBuild?
>
> Response 1: I didn't know how to do, well, I didn't know how to do everything they taught me.
>
> Response 2: Like what?
>
> Response 1: Like framing. I didn't know how to put a wall up. Didn't know how -- what else did we do -- put a floor down.
>
> Question: Did you guys put hardwood floors down or what kind of floors did you put down?
>
> Response 1: Well, I just put down the subfloor. They haven't put anything over it yet. We learned about like different types of framing. I haven't, I mean, foundations I mean, different types of foundations. We haven't done that yet, we're just learning about it.
>
> Response 2: Did you learn anything about plumbing or electrical or anything like that?
>
> Response 1: No, we haven't. Somewhat, we learned, it's kind of hard to remember all of this stuff. We used to have, before this lay-off [i.e, this site shutdown for a month due to financial difficulties] we used to have construction class every Friday. They would teach you there. But like they would teach you a bunch of things and they would never go back to it. The next week there'll be something to do and there'll be something different. The whole time we had those construction classes we never, ever have review or anything or took a test in something. So.

****

> . . .I know how to use the power tools, all the power tools, like Skillsaw. There's different saws Skillsaw, miter saw, regular hand saw, drills and different, you learn the different tools to use with the drills. You don't just grab and drill and grab any bit and put in it. They show you which bits to use, the saw's bits, how to know

> which bit is which bit and what to look for. Because some bits are used for wood and other bits are used for metal. So they teach you which one is used for which and then they taught me how to use different hand-tools such as the cat's paw, which is...
>
> . . .They showed us how to do drywall and taping. I had a little experience in that before but I had learned the wrong way because 1 was working with the, a guy named [name] -- that's his name -- who has his own construction company. But he taught me the wrong way to do it. And when [name] came along they showed me the correct way to do it. So now I'm learning the professional way to do it so that when I go do a little taping job I don't get criticized because it was done wrong.
>
> ****
>
> . . . only thing I learned really that I didn't know was framing. Demolition, everybody know how to destroy. And, some of the stuff I knew from what I learned in school, my uncles had taught me and everything. But I really learned framing, you know? You know framing, making walls and stuff like that. That's cool. They really taught me that. How to figure out how to measure your windows, you know, to fit your windows in and your rulers and everything. I knew a little bit of that but I learned a lot more since I've been here.
>
> . . .Well, I learned how to construct, what starts a building off, you know, studs and different things like that. We basically learned how to build, you know, where we start at. What type of pieces we should come with to make this. Like, we was building a miniature sized garage.
>
> . . .Everything. Roofing, framing, sheet rock, they teach everything about construction. Everything. A little of everything.

Not all YouthBuild enrollees were positive about the program. Some were disappointed. Some picked up on problems sites faced with their projects and expressed their frustration. Some were never interested in construction and found the experience tedious. Excerpts from interviews give a flavor of enrollee feelings.

> . . .When we first came in all we was basically doing is cleaning out the site. People started complaining about that. They didn't have enough equipment and all that stuff, they were saying, and all the carpenter utensils to teach us what we had to know. They finally started getting them. We started learning what we had to learn. It may have been late but it's starting now.
>
> ****
>
> Respondent: We didn't learn shit.
>
> Interviewer: You didn't learn anything?

Respondent: [laughing] We didn't learn shit. They, one [name], he had to leave because his pension was up, something like that. And [name] had to go work somewhere else.

Interviewer: These are construction managers?

Respondent: Well, he was like, yeah, one of the people that teaches us something. And the next thing I know he wasn't working here no more.

****

. . .Uh uh, um um. It's always something for us to do, it's just, it's not consistent. It'll be consistent for like a month or two or three, well we only been in here for three. It was consistent in the beginning, it's consistent now. But the reason why we really have nothin' to do right now is because we're trying to move to another location with the leases and all that stuff ready so when we get ready to go and move over there we're going to have plenty of things to do, we're going to be building the whole office.

. . .We picked up debris. We made a chute to throw the debris down outside in a wheelbarrow and then have to transfer that from the wheelbarrow to a debris box. And it was so much debris, it was, I mean this debris could fill up this whole room. I mean it was like...

****

Interviewer: Are you learning anything? I mean if you clean up or if you knock down walls what else do you do besides that?

Respondent: Basically that's about it. We build, we built, we built a bench. We built a house, a little miniature house.

****

. . .It's like we'll be on a work site. Like I was on a work site and one of the men [other trainees] said, "[Young lady's name] you might as well give it up right now 'cause you ain't going no where with construction. You might as well be looking for you another job right now." And I said, "You're crazy. I'm going to stick with this," you understand, "for as long as I can. The only thing that's going to make me not stick with it is if I get hurt or somethin' like that." You say they mess up, you might do something and some contractor, "Hey, you're check's waitin' on the desk top, now go ahead and get your check and go, don't never come back." I'm saying when they do say that that's when I'll go from construction. I'm not going to give up just like that. And then you know that person is the man who's walkin' around all day long, "Man, this job is lame. Man, it's boring." "Man, they supposed to be doin' this, they supposed to be doin' that." You know, "It's borin' we don't have nothin' to do." I mean, you know it's not all the time in construction you're going to have things to do. . .

****

> [Regarding trouble at one site getting projects]: Yeah, there was, you know. Yeah, it was like, hey, you can't build a wall if you ain't got the money for the wood, you know. You know, it wasn't their fault, you know, you know I was kind of mad about it, but, you know, you can't cry about it, you know, it's not their fault.

For some enrollees, the more important reviews of the construction training experience are not in the training or the frustration with site activities, but the general benefits. Some comments illustrating these points are cited below.

> . . .It's taught me how to make a living for myself, basically. While I'm in, all I need, even like I said, construction itself is not what I want to do. I don't want to retire doing construction. Okay? But I can survive on construction while I'm in college.

> . . .I can feed my two kids because I have construction while I'm in college. So like I said, since I been enrolleed in this program, I been working construction weekends for a licensed contractor. I've learned some things here that I can do with my hands. And it's a big help. It's a big help. I can survive. They've taught me something. YouthBuild has been a very big help to me.

••••

> . . .I think it gives you the opportunity to understand yourself a little better, become a little bit more responsible, how you deal. Not only in this program but in the family, with the community, with yourself, you know, any situation. If you use the proper tools that this program provides, the philosophy that this program provides, you could become anything you want. You know, you could do anything you want. The sky's the limit. And, you know, like me for instance, when ! first came to YouthBuild I had nothing. I had more problems than I had anything else. You know, I even had a drug addiction. Nowadays I work as a case manager. End of this month I graduate from YouthBuild. I'm going to college.

> . . .Okay, like they gave me the tools, but it's my decision if I want to learn how to use them. Do you understand what I'm saying? It's not just the construction tools, but they're giving you other tools, how to deal with issues, with feelings, with anger, with patience, 'cause when I came here I didn't have none of that but they stripped me down and it's great.

••••

> . . .Well, the first good one is that as far as any chances or breaks I had to pass, I think YouthBuild is the best thing that happened to me, as far as being able to put my life in focus and get on track so I can be where I want to be in the future and have something to look forward to. Another thing is being work oriented so the next time when I do get a job or being ready for interviews I would know how to be composed as to going about it.

****

. . .So right now my feeling's, I mean I still think YouthBuild's a great place but right now I feel like, "Oh, well." I'm in a real bad mood. I'm in a real bad mood. I mean I still like YouthBuild I mean regardless of the fact, even if I get terminated I can still say I was better off having came for the time I came 'cause I did learn a lot in this short period of time. With work skills, how to handle my personal business, how not to tell everybody my personal business 'cause people go back there and run their mouth. I learned a lot working here at YouthBuild within this little short period of time. So if I do get terminated I can say I was still better off having went for two, three months or whatever.

****

Interviewer: You said it's helping you out in your life, how so? How is your life different?

Respondent: Different on like job application skills I got a little bit better. Interview skills I'm a little better. Stuff like that to get a job.

****

Interviewer: Did you guys end up not being able to spend as much time on construction as you thought?

Respondent: . . .Because I came in here primarily just for that. I wasn't even planning on going to college, you know, just get my GED, learn some construction, get a job. It seemed like since we didn't really have that much construction, well, I said, well, and I scored high on my GED so they said, well, you can go to college if you want. And they're hooking me up now, we're sending out applications right now.

****

He comes to class. At the construction site, too, he teaches us like, he lets us like be on a, when we're trying to figure out like a angle, he lets us figure the angle out for ourself and then tells us that he knew the angle all along, just wouldn't tell us. That's kind of, that's cool. I like that. He teaches us to figure things out on our own.

In the foregoing discussion, survey data and excerpts, enrollees present a complex picture of the construction training component.

- They provide a positive but mixed evaluation of the experience;
- They have mixed motives and personal connection to the program and to construction;

- They offer some frustration with particular project problems and limitations;

and

- There is great satisfaction with some secondary benefits related to personal growth, employability, etc. which, while not measurable, are important to them.

CHALLENGES

In carrying out the YouthBuild demonstration, sites faced several challenges. Dealing with these challenges highlights the difficulties of undertaking complex social experiments where there are multiple goals. The demonstration activities contain important lessons for the replication of the new federally-funded YouthBuild program. In the sections below, we outline several of these challenges. For each, we identify the nature of the challenge, how the demonstration sites dealt with them and what lessons emerged for the replication of the YouthBuild model. YouthBuild USA as the sponsor of the model played an important role in shaping and reinterpreting the model and in mounting the demonstration, and will guide its replication.

BALANCING TEACHING AND PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

YouthBuild assists young people in moving toward the economic mainstream. Part of this youth development initiative aims to achieve goals by carrying out construction projects. In a variety of ways, however, we see on the one hand a contrast between the demands of construction project implementation, and on the other a program where the aim is to address basic education and social deficits and put young people on the track to adult responsibility. YouthBuild attempts to deal with young people who are often far from any of these goals. In chapter 9 we look at program stages and requirements for effectiveness as reflected in a commitment on the part of young people to buy into the program. The commitment to the program happens earlier for some and only after several months for others. Whether there is commitment or not, the program (i.e., classroom education, projects, etc.) proceeds.

In the early stages of the YouthBuild cycle, there are limits to what we can expect in terms of discipline and job readiness on the part of young people in the program. The vast majority of young people enrolleed in YouthBuild are ready for a program that includes education and counseling as the main focus. The expectation is that this helps in getting a job. This does not, and need not, mean they are ready for a major role in a construction project.

Listed below are some of the problems the various YouthBuild projects faced in managing the balance between projects and academic work:

- Many projects undertaken by YouthBuild were selected not because they had ideal features as training projects but simply because they represented "targets of opportunity." YouthBuild was presented with a site; the site was sometimes visible in the local neighborhood. Sometimes the mission of the sponsoring entity and not YouthBuild's training mission determined selection. In Tallahassee, the Urban League's program to build replacement housing meant that YouthBuild was presented with an opportunity to build two houses in a distant rural area so they were good for training but invisible to local residents and created an hour-and-a-half daily transportation problem.

- For a variety of reasons, there was often a mismatch in timing between the program cycle and the construction cycle. Young people would spend critical time, sometimes for extended periods, from when the cycle started through December, on demolition. While classroom training continued, the young people did not get to practice their skills and build the experience that was to be the reinforcement of classroom and field learning. While demolition is active work, it has to be viewed substantially as down-time in terms of practicing skills. As interviews suggest, demolition is sometimes a source of frustration to the young people. In several cities, the serious part of the construction phase came during the worst weather of the year, creating further delays in the long-anticipated projects. Delivery contract problems posed further slowdowns and difficulties. The classroom learning did not yield a certified competence.

- Many projects were undertaken in connection with other non-profit organizations or local government housing programs, and operated under the financial constraints associated with those programs or agencies. Financially, the projects were tight. There were few flexible resources or training funds available, so the programs were often unable to offer the extra level of effort or extra time that some students needed. For example, in Cleveland and Gary, JTPA funds did not match the time frame of the YB cycle. JTPA wanted a quicker program and Cleveland YouthBuild was never able to obtain the resources to free itself from JTPA constraints. In most cases, YouthBuild also faced the same time and quality pressures regular housing development grantees or contractors in those projects faced, meaning that often, staff or sub-contractors had to be brought in to do (or in some cases, redo) work to meet deadlines or to maintain quality control and schedule. This often resulted in only a few of the young people being able to do the full range of tasks on a given project that could be celebrated as a finished YouthBuild product. Students who were less skilled or slow to pick up the skills missed out on even more. (It is also true that those who were more ready gained valuable experience--including outside placement--and as a result of YouthBuild got excellent post-program placements.

- Groups were torn between projects that focused post-program on housing service (i.e., repairing porches, renovating kitchens, building access ramps) and development projects, where the objective was new residential construction or substantial rehabilitation of existing vacant buildings. The former projects were visible, quick and plentiful, but were poor models for training since they rarely present opportunities for structural impact. The latter projects were difficult to mount in ways we discuss below.

Tallahassee represents one site where all types of projects were offered. While the new construction project experienced problems, the construction of small, new, one-story houses provided a more consistently clear training experience than its home repair projects. In the Tallahassee case and others, the difficulties projects experienced were often better matched with the mission of the sponsoring agency than with the YouthBuild construction training mission.

- Many of the construction project opportunities were not located in either the YouthBuild or the enrollees' neighborhoods. Tallahassee, for example, had a project 15 miles away in a rural area. In other cities enrollees often spent significant time traveling between the classroom and the work site or between home and YouthBuild or both. While some travel to work is not a serious problem, the arrangement does not reinforce the service aspects of the program or a community connection for the program.

- Within all of the projects, the students' time was fractured: they were on site one week, then off one week, or their days were split. They might start a task that would then be completed by a different squad or start in the middle of someone else's task without fully understanding how their contribution fit into the total process. While unavoidable to some extent, the experience underscores the need to select projects carefully and match the timing of construction cycle tasks to complement and reinforce positive progress in other aspects of the program. It is the reinforcement of other program features (i.e., education and counseling) through hands-on training in construction that is most powerful for young people.

The YouthBuild replication will need to figure out how to load the construction project away from the front end of the cycle so that its features match and reinforce (and are reinforced by) other elements. Since they need to be doing something, perhaps the point is to build in a review and reinforcement process such that students revisit topics later after they have really settled down and become seriously engaged. The priority at the front end is on increasing the connection of young people to the program and boosting their confidence that positive personal benefits come from going along with the program. The construction features should reinforce the need to get young people to buy into the overall program goals. The site work should give young people positive reinforcement and present opportunities for progressive positive steps. Demolition as a site activity should be minimized since its effects are not consistently positive on the commitment of young people to the program.

DEALING WITH STUDENT DIFFERENCES

Young people who enrolleed in YouthBuild brought considerable variation. The differences are significant, among them age (ranges from 16 to 24), academic background (4th-grade reading level to high school graduate), work experience (no experience to many marginal jobs), personal maturity (instability to demonstrated responsibility) and other differences that influenced the motivation and willingness of young people to connect to the program. Some had interest or experience in construction, and others had neither. Some came anxious to take advantage of a program they had heard about; others were sent and came unaware or skeptical.

These differences among students exist within programs, as well as among them. These differences are significant for all aspects of the program, including students' readiness for instruction and field experience associated with a construction project. This unevenness in what young people bring to YouthBuild has two principle effects on the achievement of construction and training goals. First, some of the young people were not able to make a substantial contribution and, therefore, could not reap the rewards that successful construction activity is designed to achieve. In order for the program to be successful, program expectations have to be lowered. For example, shifting certain assignments to more capable students without "stretching" less capable students denies learning opportunities to the less capable (often less experienced) students.

Second, as we saw in the comments above, young people were faced with unpleasant or boring tasks in the early stages of some projects and that proved to be demoralizing for some students. Experience in the program sometimes sharpened or highlighted the differences in skill. It made "success" (completing the cycle, GED, and successful placement) highly probable for some and predictably unlikely for others. We do not have data to prove how many casualties resulted from sharp differences and associated demoralization.

One other issue that is important is the gender difference that we noticed sharply in Tallahassee. In that demonstration program, female enrollees while doing well in construction training work in the classroom, were marginal in their participation and contribution to the site work. They were less likely to do certain construction assignments and their tasks were more likely reassigned when they complained. In our observation and in reports from construction managers and crew, women enrollees were often unmotivated on site. At worst, they served as "gofers." They were less likely to get independent assignments. No such sharp gender issue was noted in the Boston program. Boston had a better experience in part because of conscious attention to promoting gender equity in program exposure. In the other three sites, the experience was mixed and not so sharply defined as either Boston or Tallahassee.

Another important difference is between young people who are committed to construction (or who become committed) and those who are not committed and make no pretense of interest. On a base-line survey, half of the young people rated construction training as less than a "most important" reason for joining YouthBuild. Many were very clear that their career goals were unrelated to construction. Some of the young people who had no interest in construction were nevertheless attentive and diligent and took advantage of the opportunity without necessarily making a career commitment. (A few of these planned to attend college or join the military and appreciated YouthBuild's role in helping them focus their energies.)

For young people who were interested in gaining skill and experience in construction, the program has to be regarded as an important first step. The question is whether they were pleased with or disappointed in the amount and level of training and experience they received. The placement numbers indicate that a significant number were able to get construction jobs after participation in YouthBuild and were very pleased with their experience and positive about the program's contribution to their success.

The major point here is that dealing with these differences among the students reduced the efficiency that might have been achieved had the program had fewer differences among the students. Under a program with more targeting, the discipline related to construction, for example, might have been more significant and the motivation associated with participating in good project activity would have been more substantial. The crew could have pushed harder and with projects matched to training goals. More certified training might have emerged. Other issues associated with this point about program focus are discussed later in the section below on program goals.

SYNCHRONIZING PROJECT PLANNING AND PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Implementing YouthBuild involves managing two processes. One process aims to develop young people, the other implements construction projects. The figure below details the connections we observed between these two processes. We discuss the typical experience and the way they played out at various demonstration sites in Figure 4.5 below. The development process which frames Figure 4.5 is a serious gauntlet to ask a YouthBuild program to run.

FIGURE 4.5

PRE-PLANNING: THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS AND PROJECT SELECTION IN YOUTHBUILD PROJECTS

STEPS IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS	TYPICAL PRE-PLANNING TASKS AND RELATED ISSUES IN COMMUNITY-BASED EFFORTS	OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE YOUTHBUILD DEMONSTRATION AND REPLICATION ISSUES
1. FRAMING THE PROJECT'S GOAL IN THE ORGANIZATION'S MISSION	Fundamental to the the success of a development project is its contribution to the advancement of the mission of the organization. While community development professionals sometimes suggest that community need is so great that any good project is valuable, each project has a unique set of demands and benefits which should be maximized. For an organization dedicated to training, the projects should advance the training mission. For one where training and development are core aspects of its mission, the group has to decide which is more important for each given project. Maximizing each makes it hard for a fledgling organization to build credibility. This is why CDCs rarely embrace a training component. With experience, however, the combination is sometimes possible, but training is clearly secondary. A CDC's principal decisions are whether housing service or housing development will be pursued and whether development will be new construction or rehabilitation. It also decides who the client is -- whether the unit(s) will be sold, leased or built for another entity under contract. These decisions address the "what" and "for whom" questions.	Too often the construction projects were dictated by others, with no opportunity for YouthBuild to select the site or even the type of project. In the first year especially, YouthBuild could only choose from what was offered. Those who offered projects were more interested in the housing product than training. Boston's difficulty in partnering with a local CDC did not keep it from getting an appropriate training project. Cleveland and Tallahassee, on the other hand, had difficulties because the buildings they were given were not consistent with what they needed for training. The situation would improve in all sites in year two but some difficulties still existed. San Francisco was a special case because there were few residential opportunities around. In our interviews with SF CDCs, they were sympathetic to the problems YouthBuild faced but had learned from experience in the 1960s and 1970s that mixing missions was a bad idea.

2. IDENTIFICATION OF OPTIONS	Ideally, community-based organizations want to be flexible and keep their options open, so they will use the broadest category possible. For example, they may be vague up front about whether or not they are promoting rental housing, knowing that they can be more specific later, depending on the deal offered to them.	For YouthBuild, flexibility at this stage has a different meaning. Training is so important that they first must decide if the project would be a good training venue. If the answer is no, nothing else matters. The YB staff may find themselves alone in emphasizing the training element (vs. housing issues) and may be pressed by others to compromise. Time is also a factor. Youthbuild needs a simple project in order to start, complete and wrap it up within the cycle. The typical CBO project time frame is 2.5 - 4 years.
3. NEGOTIATION OF PROJECT DETAILS	Self explanatory, except that there is a discussion after site selection about how to support the sponsoring organization--in covering their costs. They also want to add to their working capital reserve and to seed new projects. This is typically resisted by funders who prefer to spread resources and/or keep groups on a "short lease."	For YouthBuild, there are the usual issues as well as the question of who pays for the training-associated direct and indirect costs, which should be carefully detailed by this point (but the demonstration sites often were not.) The training costs must be built into the budget. In the demonstration, these were alway underestimated.
4. ASSEMBLY OF A DEVELOPMENT TEAM	Nonprofits are often weak in this area. The ideal is to identify working partners and stay with them from project to project. These partners supplement staff or perform tasks for which there is no staff. Nonprofits typically move around, resulting in an increased transaction cost.	YouthBuild has the typical problems and must also try to smoothly incorporate into a development project a training component that will add costs, time and, in the minds of some, complications. The issue is that staffing is usually not done with project management in mind. Demonstration sites used a very narrow definition of coordination of construction with little backwards linkage to, for example, site selection, or forward linkage to financing.

5. PROCURE FINANCING, INCLUDING SUBSIDY COMMITMENTS	Self-explanatory.	YouthBuild has the added task of indentifying flexible funds to cover costs that will not be covered in other ways, for example, when the project is rushed or staff overtime must make up for bad weather or delivery delays. Flexible funds are needed to deal with the many aspects of the process and to build a cash cushion in a business where time is money. Taking significantly more time to do a task may be very important for training purposes, but it can be expensive.
6. COMMENCE PRE-CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY (SITE CONTROL, DESIGN WORK, ETC.)	At this point, most CDCs have a project manager to manage all aspects of the project. This is different from the construction manager (or "clerk of the works") who manages the on-site supervision.	YouthBuild does not have the role of project manager, though it does have the construction manger who, in attempting to supervise on-site work with young people and keep the project going, could easily slip on both. The executive director usually has little, if any, actual development experience and cannot be a substitute beyond the broad outline of a private development initiative. YouthBuild directors were not hired (and are not paid) based on the development staff model; a human service background is more typical. The construction manager is often a trade person and not a "manager" in the way a CDC or lender would see this role. Salary difference and the limited challenge of being part of a non-development organization makes it hard to attract good people.

7. COMMENCE CONSTRUCTION/ CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT (AND TRAINING)	Typically, the CDC would turn over the construction to a construction manager who works under the supervision of the project manager. The project manager starts a new development process at this stage or a little earlier so that there is another project in place when this one is finished. (Projects typically take 2.5 to 4 years from start to finish and not all projects that are started even reach the construction stage.) To justify a full-time person, there needs to be 2-4 projects per project management staff member. To have a staff member work as a project manager full time on only one project (except a very large one) would be too costly.	To this step the YouthBuild model adds a training component in the construction process. In some cases, nothing about the process is different except the addition of this training component. The training component faces several risks in being integrated into this process: • some projects do not make it to this stage, leaving the YB program with no project, forcing them to scramble to "find something;" • projects are often not on schedule; • the stage of construction and the kind of experience needed for training may not match; • the financial assumptions for the training exercise may allow few concessions for the vagaries of training (i.e., loss of materials, lost time, work that has to be redone, craftsmanship, etc.) There are also risks for the project. A key risk is increased (and noncompetitive) costs. The YouthBuild demonstration sites faced all of these problems and sometimes combinations of them. They often lacked sufficient staff or capable staff to handle them so the training component suffered.
8. MARKETING OR DEALING WITH CLIENTS	CDCs must spend some time dealing with prospective clients or sponsors. Generally, there is minimal impact on the construction still underway assuming construction goes well. In any case the problem comes when the lender ties cash drawdowns to meeting particular milestones. Missing milestones creates a financial and credibility problem. Withholding money is a typical way of insuring satisfaction.	Typically, YouthBuild has no one staff person responsible for this function except as an overload. Since they are dealing in one or two units, this not a problem area unless there are quality issues or serious delays that create a financial problem for YouthBuild. Since YouthBuild lacked deep pockets, these glitches did create serious cash flow problems -- and worse.

9. DISPOSITION (I.E., SALE, LEASE, ETC.)	Disposing of the completed project is an important milestone. Beyond the satisfaction of completing a project, this is the opportunity to realize a small profit (less than 5% is typical) and to move into the next project that, hopefully, is a reality by this time.	This step should be the same for YouthBuild with the added satisfaction the young people gain.

FINDING APPROPRIATE PROJECTS

Given the goals of the YouthBuild Program and the nature of the communities it serves, selecting projects is an important process since it shapes one of the central experiences young people have. The selection determines whether young people have the chance to experience the feeling of accomplishment associated with a completed task or, alternatively, to endure the frustration of working on a project whose features are inappropriate for training purposes. The project selected should be of sufficient scale to provide enough work to last through the program cycle. In addition, it should involve an appropriate variety of tasks to match the curriculum that the staff want to cover.

The YouthBuild demonstration highlights some of the real difficulties in balancing the program goals and the project goals through the site selection process. Substantial pre-cycle project planning is critical. It takes time to select a project and to do the advance work. In the past, many of the troubled projects were taken on simply because they were "targets of opportunity" or last-minute replacements for broken promises or stalled acquisitions. All of the demonstration sites except Boston experienced serious problems putting projects together and bringing them on line. San Francisco had the problem of scarcity and the high cost of residential real estate development opportunities. This meant that residential projects were not available to YouthBuild San Francisco at any time in the YouthBuild demonstration. While CDCs were approached about collaboration on the projects they had, they resisted for reasons discussed above. In any case, nonprofit developers were doing large-scale, multi-family projects for which YouthBuild trainees would have been inappropriate.

Gary and Cleveland faced problems gaining control of suitable residential sites in cities that have plenty of vacant housing. The main problem was obtaining the funding necessary to support and subsidize the construction and training. Sometimes the funding was not available, and at other times the string attached did not mesh with the program's needs.

Tallahassee had difficulty in getting projects initially. They finally took rehab projects for the local Urban League and a local county housing rehabilitation program. In both cases, YouthBuild had to work with very limited budgets. Tallahassee would later take on new construction. This worked much better as a training venue in part because new construction contains none of the mysteries and hidden problems common to rehabilitation projects and quality is more visible.

All of the construction projects, including Boston's, were precariously capitalized so that they were unable to operate comfortably at the edge of feasibility. All of the sites had little flexible funding and, over the course of the demonstration, needed to be bailed out by YouthBuild USA. The best spin is to say that the programs had predictable cash flow problems. The fundamental problem is that they lacked capital on which to conduct even the most modest development activity. Training had no flexible resources.

There is a lot to be said for creating a project training laboratory in place of actual sites. This would be a site where some or all of the construction experience would take place. While creating a permanent site has some additional costs for start-up (and generates no offsetting income), a permanent site avoids many of the problems we have described. It has the advantage of control over the timing and nature of the hands-on experience. When the pressure of being on time and on budget common for a real site is removed, a more personally tailored experience can be arranged. The requirements for high-quality training, rather than project completion, can be the basis on which decisions are made. It would have been easier to determine and to evaluate individual students' contributions to a project. Weather and financing problems would not produce the delays and gaps projects experienced. Activities could have been paced to match other parts of the YouthBuild experience.

In the lab scheme, there need be no demolition; the certainty of the tasks makes it possible to have a match between classroom training curriculum and site activities. This makes it possible to be clear about what the training outcomes are. While a laboratory approach makes no immediate contribution to the community's housing stock, it does enable young people to do small projects outside YouthBuild after they learn the basics in the laboratory. "Intermediate-level trainees" could be placed as interns or in jobs where they could get real experience. (The late-cycle placement with contractors happened in all the demonstration sites under the present arrangement.)

FRAMING PROGRAM GOALS AND PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

YouthBuild's goal for construction training may be interpreted as one of three alternatives. The first is to produce a "job ready" laborer (Model I); the second is to prepare a "semi-skilled construction worker" (Model II); and the third is to train an "apprenticeship worker" (Model III). Each of these brings the need for a particular set of program features and program requirements. The matrix in Figure 4.6 outlines the possibilities and compares them with features of the YouthBuild program.

The projects reviewed in the YouthBuild Demonstration are all Model I. Boston most consistently strived toward elements of Models II and III. Cleveland presented itself as offering a Model III but the design, as well as implementation, showed that only a very small number of students could achieve Model III results, and fewer, in fact, did. San Francisco tried to achieve Model II and Model III results but, with a few individual exceptions, the program remained Model I in its principle dimensions. Gary's efforts to go beyond Model I were frustrated by its inability to shape its enrollment and to develop projects to match its goal. Despite the efforts to go beyond Model I, YouthBuild has been

Figure 4.6

Project Requirements for Different Program Goals

	Model I If the Program Aims to Produce a "Job Ready Laborer... "	Model II If the Program Aims to Produce a "Semi-Skilled Construction Worker..."	Model III If the Program Aims to Produce an "Apprentice Worker..."
1. Program Vision	To get young people to conform to traditional expectations for dependable performance in unskilled positions and to help them gain academic and personal skills for further advancement after YouthBuild.	To get young people to conform to traditional expectations and possess certified entry-level skills for dependable performance in semi-skilled construction positions and to help them gain academic and personal skills for further advancement and training.	To get young people to conform to traditional expectations for success in apprenticeship programs and to help them gain academic and personal skills for further advancement and personal satisfaction.
2. Recruitment and Selection	Enrollees need not have any special qualification other than wanting to gain the benefits of the program and get "off the streets." There is no skill or educational prerequisite.	The enrollees should be committed to work in construction and have sufficient education that they can learn construction lessons that depend on a good 7th grade education.	The enrollees should be committed to work in construction and have sufficient education that they can learn construction lessons that depend on a good 7th grade education. The selection should be made in consultation with the appropriate local union and/or employers to make sure that successful participation in the program will result in post program placement. Set-asides would be attractive but are not critical.

3. Orientation	The orientation should focus on identifying those who are committed to connecting to the program and should include a means to test for seriousness within the first few weeks.	The program should include a mechanism to test for basic safety and elementary academic skills. A placement test and/or pre-enrollment work experience might be appropriate to weed out those who are not capable or ready for this program.	Orientation should be done in consultation with the local union to test readiness to take the steps an apprentice program might require.
4. Implementation and Management	Training takes place in a supportive but rigorous environment. Concessions are made for those who need to learn discipline, etc. Late cycle placement opportunities to work on a job site for a small number of enrollees. The program length would be 9 months with a post-program element to advise young people in the early months after the program. Implementation is done in close collaboration with local training and placement programs with the goal of transition to these programs.	Training takes place in a controlled and rigorous project on carefully selected sites. Late cycle opportunities to work on a job site arranged for selected students. The program length would be longer than was the case in the demonstration program. Implementation is done in collaboration with the union and contractor community to help students with job placement and with agencies for students who go on to other training.	Training takes place in a controlled and rigorous environment with late cycle opportunities to work on job sites. The program length would be longer than was the case in the demonstration program. Implementation is done in close collaboration with the union and contractor community with appropriate placement assured for the successful graduate.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

5. Enrollee Discipline and Adherence to the Contract	Focus on the progressive learning of work habits and basic work skills. Enrollees would be expected to adhere to a contract that outlines simple expectations regarding attendance and participation.	Contract would center on rules about learning, teamwork, attitude and work habits. Milestones would be clear and related to skills, including academic skills where necessary. Adherence to the contract would be a condition to remaining in the program.	A strict set of expectations and milestones would be presented to the enrollee with a clear signal about what the threshold is for various levels of progress towards getting into the construction trades, and that milestones have to be reached.
6. Staffing	Staffing would be biased to make sure the program would help young people learn to cope with and take advantage of the program. Teaching employability skills would be top priority. Attendance and GED success would be the main measure and staff would be deployed to support this goal. Construction work experience would have more limited expectations and staffing would reflect this.	Staffing would be done in consultation with the local union and contractors to make sure that critical entry skills are taught and certified. GED woud be important, but students selected would be close to completion and staff would be limited in this area. Counseling staff would be available as well.	Staffing would be done in consultation with the local union system to make sure that teachers are experienced and satisfactory to those who will have to accept the training quality. Without additional resources, this means fewer counseling staff and restrictions as to who can be enrolled.
7. Classroom Training and Achieving GED	Focus on safety, basic skills and general education. Tasks should be as much motivational as instrumental. There is no pretense here that enrollees are learning a conventional set of construction skills. Emphasis is on good work habits, motivation, personal empowerment.	Enrollees should have a level of educational attainment that allows them to benefit from construction training. While this need not be at the level of the GED, this level may serve to exclude some otherwise attractive candidates whose academic skills are too low to do the math or reading required.	Enrollees should have a level of educational attainment that allows them to benefit from construction training. This may even be at the level of GED.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

8. Construction Training in the Classroom	Limited to safety and basic skills in support of the trade.	Emphasis is on skills to prepare for the trade, work habits and mental attitude.	Program should follow local rules about what trainees in a given category should know and the skills they should possess.
9. On-Site Project Experience	Basic exposure to simple jobs with a clear but limited role.	Emphasis is on projects that give some experience to each trainee on all aspects of carpentry in a residential construction job. Individual experience and basic skills must be certified for each successful enrollee.	Individual proficiency at specific tasks specified by the applicable union must be certified for each person. Both the trainee and program must be confident that a skill has been learned.
10. Placement	Enrollees are helped with job search skills and job hunting or assisted in finding other training or educational programs.	Students are tutored in how to present themselves and operate effectively in the job market. The program assists graduates by finding positions for skilled entry-level workers whom it supports in program-to-job transition.	Students are connected with union or other programs and assisted in how to effectively use the program to advance their training or get a position.
11. Principal Evaluation Criterion	Program completion and any of several possible positive outcomes, including additional programs, GED, job, and school.	Majority who complete program (based on both attendance and competencies gained) will take a job in the construction industry in a positon that requires skills learned at or sharpened by YB.	Placement in appropriate union program or trade job consistent with local practice.

12. Follow-up	The post program follow-up makes sure enrollees connect with new resources and supports them in dealing with personal problems. The program serves as counselor advocate or referral source. Extended enrollment might be necessary.	The post-program follow-up makes sure enrollees connect with resources to support them in dealing with personal problems.	The program follows up with the union. Perhaps a formal liaison is appropriate to assist young people with personal difficulties.

successful at Model I only.

Our judgment of the success of the YouthBuild demonstration is based on the Model 1 criteria, namely that there is a high level of program completion. What the young people gain in skills, work habits and self-esteem is highly variable and depends on what they bring to the program, how quickly they are able to overcome personal problems, the opportunities presented during their tenure and the effectiveness of efforts made to connect them to the outside world. For some young people, dramatic progress is associated with participation in YouthBuild; for others, the program provides nine months of stability and less time "on the streets." For most, successful completion is associated with the attainment of jobs or other positive outcomes. The more modest (albeit important) achievements of a Model I program graduate should be considered in light of what the life of the typical enrollee was like before YouthBuild and the benefits of the personal transformation many of the enrollees experienced.

Programs based on Model II and Model III would by definition have higher standards requiring, for example, that more than half of the successful graduates take skilled positions or move a step toward a journeyman's position in the construction trades or the union. They imply less time in the program spent preparing for the GED, less tolerance for certain negative behavior and more time on a very focused and certifiable curriculum that results in mastery of skills.

Buried within Figure 4.6 are several implications about the matter of competencies. Competence in construction is associated with mastering of specific skills. It is our judgment that a number of the enrollees obtained some level of skill but they were not consistently at the level of either a semi-skilled laborer or an apprentice. While by observation and report, the young people did learn skills, these were not marketable as competencies for the carpentry trade. This is, in part, because no threshold of achievement was demonstrated and certified. In the program some skills were simply demonstrated on the site but not taught. While the learning that young people achieved in the program was enough for lower-level entry positions, the inconsistent pattern across sites, within sites (for young people with different backgrounds) and across cycles meant that the program's claims had to be quite modest. Even though this conclusion sounds like a serious critique of the program, it is not. The main thing to understand here is that limitations exist to what can be accomplished in nine months of construction training in a program that targets YouthBuild's population and the level of resources typically available to YouthBuild sites. Even within these limitations, however, important youth development occurs.

Social programs can both build marketable skills and make dramatic personal transformations in the lives of young people. The most widely known example of this might be the U.S. Army (before the late 1970s when high school graduation became a requirement). The Army took young people who at the lower end of the inducted rank were not dissimilar to YouthBuild enrollees. The Army put them through an intensive three-month program during which time they were able both to make rather dramatic personal changes (i.e., maturity, work habit, teamwork, etc.) as well as learn skills (i.e., cooking, engineering skills, mechanics, etc.). The point is that intense and focused transformation is possible and, unlike the old Army, basic education and personal empowerment in YouthBuild offer the chance for young people to make further gains.

Our conclusion that the YouthBuild Demonstration was a successful Model I construction training program is not meant to suggest that there are no alternatives for program improvement beyond committing to Model II or Model III. Despite some successful outcomes, a number of young people dropped out after the initial orientation period and not all students who completed the program had placements that led to firm attachments in the mainstream work force. Some were drawn back to the "streets."

The program with its present expectations can help more students, and program benefits can be more durable and widespread. There are some lessons from the demonstration. Model I seems to be the level to which the replication is committed. The lessons we draw are organized in the form of comments about aspects of the demonstration program. Figure 4.7 on the next page outlines areas of change and illustrative features of an enhanced Model I program.

CONSTRUCTION STAFF CAPACITY

In staffing YouthBuild, the tendency was to select staff with experience in education, youth programs, social services and vocational education. Vocational education teachers were particularly critical with the skill components, and journeymen workers were retained as crew leaders. None of the demonstration programs hired staff with significant background in construction or project management even though this was a major component of a project. It is no wonder that in finding and managing projects and handling related complications caused serious and persistent problems.

In a typical CDC the staff person responsible for project management takes care of identifying projects, doing the preparatory project development work, assembling a team of workers and sub-contractors, identifying financial resources, managing construction and other development team members and taking care of the relationship with sponsors, funders and local officials. This is a substantial responsibility; even the smallest development project does not proceed without attention to these matters.

The difficulty YouthBuild demonstration projects had in finding and maintaining good projects and managing the many facets of the project is explained in large part by the lack of staff with experience in this area. Unrealistically tight YouthBuild project budgets

Figure 4.7

Program Action to Improve Model I YouthBuild Program

Program Feature	Possible Action
The Selection Process	Shift the enrollment process to select those who are socially and academically more ready for the program in construction (or some other field). Alternatively, hold a short total immersion (i.e., residential) orientation program to move quickly to identify those who could benefit from the program and to develop the attitude that will dispose the young people to participate in the program. (The demonstration sites attempted to work -- for several weeks or more -- with a number of young people who were not ready or disposed to participate in the program, and as a result represented a distraction and a drain on the staff and the resources. At worst, and in addition, they distorted the program by lowering the standards and forcing staff to do whatever was required to keep in them in the program for statistical and financial reasons.)
Program Length	The longer the program, the more that can be taught and the more distance enrollees can put between themselves and the street. Several demonstration programs found that they had to informally extend the program in order to provide the support through the early post-program months and to help with job search and counseling.
Program Intensity	While we did not ask the young people if the program was intense, our observation and their comments do not suggest that it was. (By intensity, we mean a combination of more exposure, longer days, more homework, high standards of accountability and frequent assessments of progress on established milestones as a basis for continuation in the program.) There are some potential gains to increasing the intensity of the program. More material can be covered. There is less time for distraction and more time to practice and sharpen skills. The training product will be more clear. A more intense program will require more planning, greater staff coordination and a greater commitment to individual attention and counseling. A more intense program might result in higher dropout rate until adjustments are made in the selection process and in support features.

were accepted; time tables did not take account of YouthBuild training features; and the cost issues (discussed below) were rarely to YouthBuild's advantage. Being apart from the CDC community, YouthBuild lacked access to "soft money" and capital that CDCs can sometimes get when they face similar problems.

At least two alternatives exist by which YouthBuild could deal with this problem more successfully. The first is to joint venture with a CDC and have the project management capability of the CDC serve the YouthBuild project. While Gary had problems with its sites, it at least had the resources of capable staff in project management because it operated in a CDC. The other option is to hire staff or a consultant (a "clerk of the works") whose responsibility would be in this area. This is an extra cost beyond the cost already associated with projects. The difficulty for YouthBuild sites is that at their scale of operation--one or two small projects per cycle--this would become an expensive service and perhaps not one deserving of a full-time person. Nevertheless, project management is a substantial responsibility to be carried throughout the life of the project; success cannot be sustained without making sure that projects are well designed and managed. Perhaps training the construction manager and executive director on how to do some of the tasks could be minimally adequate, but this works only if they are willing to give the appropriate priority to the tasks and accept the training.

FRAMING AND FACING THE ISSUE OF PROGRAM COST

Indeed we have to say that the first step -- figuring out total cost -- is not possible. As it turns out, the data were quite inadequate. The fundamental problem is that the sites and the nature of the projects did not lend themselves to the careful cost accounting that such documentation requires. Despite major efforts on our part to document the program, data gaps were serious and when data were provided we noted a number of problems which cautioned against interpretations. Data for testing alternative explanations were not available. Listed below are some of the problems we encountered in trying to interpret the data.

At the outset in this research, we had hoped to review various issues related to the cost of the construction training component. Specifically, we wanted to calculate total cost, costs relative to other training and development programs undertaken by nonprofits and the training premium on total development cost. The hope was that this would be helpful in making a judgment about the value of the program in the community development arena, where, as we have discussed above, it remains on the periphery. These goals proved to be impossible to reach.

- Time spent on projects by all staff was not documented. For some programs, work was done by staff formally identified with other parts of the organization and the time and costs are not included in YouthBuild budget numbers. Sometimes, some of the work was done by the sponsor or the City.
- A variety of in-kind contributions were available that made a full listing of costs and assignment of costs difficult.
- Costs were scattered among a variety of sources -- the City, YouthBuild, training programs, sponsors and foundations. In most of the projects, there was other labor not always associated with YouthBuild whose costs were not counted by YouthBuild.
- The projects were not comparable. They ranged from a new house in a rural area to renovation of a multifamily structure in a high-cost area. Groups added a room to a small frame structure, built classroom space, demolished institutional space, painted and performed repairs. Each type of work is associated with a different cost standard. Even if we had figured out the cost, there is too little comparability among the programs and contemporary CDCs do little of this type of work, preferring instead to do medium-sized, multi-family rental rehabilitation projects.

In suggesting that we were not able to get data we do not suggest that there was non-cooperation from demonstration sites. Indeed we were given the information requested and many of the caveats we cite here. However, the necessary information would have to come from a variety of sources not associated with the program and not verifiable ex post. Because we asked, we know in some cases that the information was never collected or recorded.

Despite the limited data and its questionable quality, there is nothing to suggest that when one adds the construction costs and the training costs that there is a significant cost advantage or major cost premium associated with YouthBuild work. We would expect that when all of the costs are totaled--the work, subcontractors, training, project management, overhead and the education associated with the training--the costs could not help but be substantially more than if the same development task were done by an experienced work crew. We also expect that there is a premium associated with the cost of training that includes redundancy in tasks, correcting mistakes and extending the time.

The volume of housing involved and the training agenda of the program should lead to the conclusion that cost is not a basis for supporting the program or opposing it. In any community-based housing development, the cost of construction is not the issue. Instead, far more often costs relating to site and acquisition, and to transactions costs (i.e., legal fees, financing, etc.) determine the total cost profile and the variation among providers. These costs reflect the nature of the financial deal, not the character of the sponsor or whether youth are involved.

CONCLUSION

In this section, we have detailed key points about the construction and training component of the YouthBuild Demonstration. We conclude that this element has been an important and successful part of the demonstration. Projects were developed and completed. Young people improved their job habits, gained experience and learned some construction skills. Some made a successful link to the job market. Most young people had positive outcomes. Other positive elements are documented in other sections of the report.

We have prepared this chapter to highlight what program features could have made the program more effective and can help in replication. The suggestions offered here are presented to highlight the points in all aspects of the construction and training program -- from framing the mission of construction and training to recruitment, staffing site selection, etc. As such, these present clear issues and frame opportunities for an effective replication of the model.

PART III

PREDICTING PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

by Ronald F. Ferguson

CHAPTER 5

INTRODUCTION TO THE ANALYSIS OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Young people come to YouthBuild with life styles and attitudes that make some more likely than others to have good attendance, to form trusting relationships with teachers and counselors, to achieve positive terminations from the program and, if they are high school dropouts, to earn the General Equivalency Diploma (GED). The 10 site-years of the YouthBuild Demonstration Project produced substantial differences on all of these measures, among participants as well as among site-years. The next few chapters suggest that much of the variation in outcomes, both within and among site-years, is the result of base-line differences among YouthBuild participants. These differences include skills, goals, attitudes and life styles developed over 16 to 24 years of life experience. In addition, holding constant the characteristics of trainees, we suggest the rough magnitude of differences in outcomes among site-years due to the quality of staff and management practices.

Explanations for program performance are consequential. Perceptions concerning why some sites achieve better results than others can affect levels of financial support and technical assistance. Hence, better information can lead to more accurate decisions by funders and by the intermediaries that provide technical assistance. Similarly, if individual sites can understand more clearly the reasons that some of their participants achieve more success than others, they may understand better how to adjust their recruitment and screening criteria or the mix and intensity of their program practices. At a minimum, they might monitor more carefully the progress of trainees whose base-line characteristics or early performance make them seem less likely to succeed.[9]

---

[9] For example, a monthly survey that each staff member completed to report the quality of his or her relationship with each participant is among the sources of data for this study. It had the potential during the demonstration to be an early warning system for failure.

This introduction to the chapters on youth development sketches the ideas that guide both the statistical and the qualitative analyses. In addition, it defines the variables that the statistical analysis uses. Then, three substantive chapters follow. Chapter 6 reports findings about relationships and attendance. Chapter 7 reports the determinants of positive termination and GED completion. Chapter 8 reports gaps in performance among the site-years and discusses graphs of simulated positive termination and GED completion rates. The type of analysis in chapter 8 has the potential to inform decisions about recruitment and screening as well as performance targets and accountability.

CORE IDEAS

A stock question during the interviews with YouthBuild trainees was, "Why are you still here while others who started when you did are gone?" Answers often concerned *readiness*: "They weren't ready. I was. A year or two ago I wouldn't have been." Asked to define what "ready" means, the respondent would continue with some combination of the following: "They [trainees who left] haven't figured out yet that there's no future on the streets. You can make money for a while, but sooner or later you end up dead or in jail. Almost all of my friends are dead or in jail. Plus, I have a baby now and I want to be a good father. I don't want my kid to see me like this -- no job and nothing to offer. Some guys who didn't stick with the program are having too much fun. They need more time before they're ready." Asked about youth who program managers expelled from the program, many would say: "The program didn't kick them out. They new the rules. They had chances. They kicked themselves out. They weren't ready."

Hence, the importance of *readiness* to *engage* YouthBuild both socially and in ways that promote one's cognitive and vocational development is a central theme in the explanation for why some youth survive the program and do well while others do not.

Parallel themes address reasons that some site-years of the program are more effective. Reasons concern the quality of instruction and management practices, as perceived by trainees, and the balance between pampering trainees and challenging them to perform in the program's core activities.

To engage something is to become involved with it in a focused way. Using measures of readiness developed below, we hypothesize that the more ready participants are for the YouthBuild program, the more quickly and effectively they will engage the program as an opportunity for personal development. Further, as youth engage the program and learn from it, they will acquire new competencies, new beliefs and new attitudes. These changes will improve life options, including options for employment, and will lead to healthier and more sustainable life styles. In addition, acquiring new competencies and adopting new beliefs and attitudes will lead naturally to changes in "identity." By definition, identity comprises both the "persona" (the "performance" through which we communicate who we are) and the "internalized self" (what we actually think and feel about ourselves). To summarize, we hypothesize the following.

- Readiness for YouthBuild affects the degree of engagement (i.e., focused attention and effort). *Social* engagement comes first and is the foundation for engagement that has a more *developmental* focus.
- Levels of both social and developmental engagement affect the degree to which youth develop new competencies, beliefs, attitudes and life styles, including daily routines of time use.
- By-products of the above changes include more positive identities, including the internalized self, the behaviors that comprise the persona and, ultimately, the reputation.

The key concepts here are readiness, engagement and development.

Identity -- internalized self, persona and reputation -- is a notion that subsumes multiple dimensions of development. The realization that some participants were growing into new identities during the program came initially from interviews with youth and staff members. It lead us to explore ideas concerning the development of identity as a way to help frame the analysis. As youth go through the YouthBuild program, they travel simultaneously along two overlapping but distinguishable paths of development. Each involves episodic revisions in identity. One is a "life-cycle" path from birth through mature adulthood (or premature death). The other path is that through the YouthBuild program, from entry through graduation (or premature termination). As explained more thoroughly in chapter 9, the Ferguson/Snipes (FS) model adapts Erik Erikson's model of *life-cycle* identity development to help frame an understanding of development *in the context of a given institutional setting*. Here, of course, that setting is the YouthBuild program. Through the statistical analysis that follows below and through the qualitative analysis in chapter 9, this study uses the FS model to help organize the presentation.

The model calls attention to the idea that young people may go through several stages of engagement during their participation in the YouthBuild program. Figure 5.1 summarizes the model here and appears again as figure 9.2 in chapter 9. The initial stages are necessarily superficial and "social" as each youth endeavors to negotiate a fit with the program's social environment. Often, this includes testing the staff through acts of speech and behavior that challenge the staff's authority. At many times during this initial period youth are not seriously focused on what they hope to learn. Often, they simply "go through the motions" in the classroom and on the work site, with fleeting resolves to buckle down.

This early period corresponds to the "trust" and "autonomy" stages in the FS model. Each stage has a focal "task." The focal task of the trust stage is to become comfortable enough to stay with the program through the early days and weeks. The focal task of the autonomy stage is to negotiate a balance between autonomy and

FIGURE 5.1

STAGES IN A YOUTH'S DEVELOPMENT IN THE YOUTHBUILD PROGRAM
AND ASSOCIATED DEVELOPMENTAL TASKS AS THE YOUTH PROGRESSES

Each Stage Builds Upon Old Tasks and Introduces a New Task

STAGES ↓	TASKS →				
I	Feel an Initial Sense of Trust and Comfort				
II	Trust Becomes Codified, Deeper and Differentiated	Negotiate Balance of Autonomy vs. Staff Authority			
III	Trusted People Relied Upon for Advice Concerning a New Life Direction	Autonomy Expressed Within the Appropriate Range	Initiate Real Attempt to Collaborate Toward Self Development		
IV	Trusted Teachers and Advisors Give Support and Reassurance as Trainee Expresses More Industriousness	Trainees Can Be Trusted to Expand the Initial Range of Permitted Autonomy	Specific Goals for Self Development (Skills and Orientations) Guide Actions	Strive Toward Competence, Integrate Skills, & Build Belief in Capacity for Mastery	
V	Trusted Advisors Positively Affirm the Trainee's New Identity	Autonomy Controls No Longer Necessary	Identify Self with the New Skills and Orientations	Identify Self as Competent to Use Skills & Learn More	Achieve Integration of Identity Components

NEW DEVELOPMENTAL TASK:

Stages
- I. Trust vs. Mistrust
- II. Autonomy vs. Shame & Doubt
- III. Initiative vs. Guilt
- IV. Industry vs. Inferiority
- V. Identity vs. Identity Confusion

Adapted by R. Ferguson and J. Snipes from work on identity by E. Erikson.

conformity, while continuing to develop a deeper and more differentiated set of trusting relationships with peers and members of the staff. Responding to a pretention of these ideas, members of the staff at the Boston site agreed that passing through these first two stages, where engagement is generally more social than otherwise developmental, seems to require four to five months for trainees in Boston.

Ideally, a period of steadier developmental engagement in the program follows. This corresponds to the "initiative" and "industry" stages of the FS model. Transition into this period depends fundamentally upon the trusting relationships and the understanding of the environment that the trainee develops during the first few months. In YouthBuild, successes during the "initiative" and "industry" stages include working toward and earning the GED, becoming competent to complete various construction projects and developing the skills and confidence to participate in community affairs.

The initiative stage is the time when youth make up their minds concerning what goals to pursue. They also struggle to overcome any ambivalence that they may have due, for example, to survivor's guilt or because of accusations by friends who say that they are "selling out." Then, the industry stage is when participants work most industriously to achieve their goals. Successes warrant revisions in identity, as defined above, both in the context of the program, and beyond.[10] Each stage has possible traps and downsides, and many youth are not completely successful.

The ideas in the paragraphs above figure most prominently in chapters 9 and 10. They are present, but mostly in the background, in chapters 6, 7 and 8. The more prominent ideas in the latter chapters are outlined immediately below. Of course, the two sets of ideas are mutually reinforcing. Both concern what it takes for trainees to stay with the program, and to move progressively through stages of increasing engagement with it.

---

[10] An important topic that is beyond the scope of this report, but worth highlighting, is the success or lack thereof that youth have when they move beyond YouthBuild into other settings that may or may not be willing to accept and support the identities that they develop through the program.

The ideas that are most prominent in chapters 6, 7 and 8 build on other work by motivational psychologists.[11] For any given type of activity in which youth might engage, the deepest levels of engagement will come when youth believe that they have some control over the outcomes and that the outcomes are desirable. These activities may be related to the social engagement of the first two stages in the FS model, or the developmental engagement of the later stages. For each such activity, this requires:

- clear *Goals* toward which to aspire;
- knowledge of *Strategies* to use in pursuit of those goals;
- possession of *Skills and other Resources* to implement the strategies;
- an expectation that *Rewards* are sufficient to justify the effort.

The most important *rewards* are satisfactions along fundamental human motive dimensions such as the drives to experience achievement, affiliation, influence and security (including freedom from hunger).

For YouthBuild, resources to facilitate engagement in the program and rewards to encourage it depend heavily upon qualities of the program's staff and management. Most importantly, before they fully engage the program, youth want to be sure that the staff will be trustworthy in several domains. We have distilled the concerns that youth have into what we call "the four trust questions":

1. Caring and Motives: Can I trust these people to care about me and to serve my interests?
2. Competence: Can I trust these people to know what they are talking about -- to be competent enough to give me good advice and guidance?
3. Resources and Dependability: Can I trust these people to have the resources to do what they say they'll do?

---

[11] See Ferguson, 1994. Also see Skinner, Wellborn and Connell, 1990.

4. Enjoyment, Respect and Fairness: Can I trust these people to provide an experience that I will not only grow from but that I will enjoy as well? Will they respect me, especially in front of other people, and be fair to me?

Youth who decide that they can answer a tentative "yes" to each of the four trust questions are, we posit, more ready than before to move away from the goals, strategies, skills and rewards associated with any less constructive preoccupations outside of YouthBuild and toward those associated with positive engagements in the YouthBuild program, and beyond. During their participation in the program, youth will continue collecting and updating information about the four trust questions. The new information will confirm or disconfirm earlier impressions and justify or discourage continued engagement.

Figure 5.2 summarizes the conceptual scheme for quantitative analysis of the YouthBuild program. The box across the top of the diagram repeats the list for what "Engagement Requires: ..." (i.e., Goals, Strategies, Skills and other Resources, and Rewards). Below the box, the diagram shows two major levels of engagement. "Social Engagement" corresponds to the "Trust" and "Autonomy" stages of the FS model, while "Instrumental Engagement (Beyond Social)" corresponds to the "Initiative" and "Industry" stages. The domains of instrumental engagement listed on the figure represent the most prominent components of the YouthBuild Model: Counseling, construction training, GED preparation and leadership training. "Outcomes," shown at the bottom of the diagram, include changes in various aspects of identity and opportunity, as reflected in new goals, knowledge of new strategies, possession of new skills and access to different resources and rewards than were available before the program.

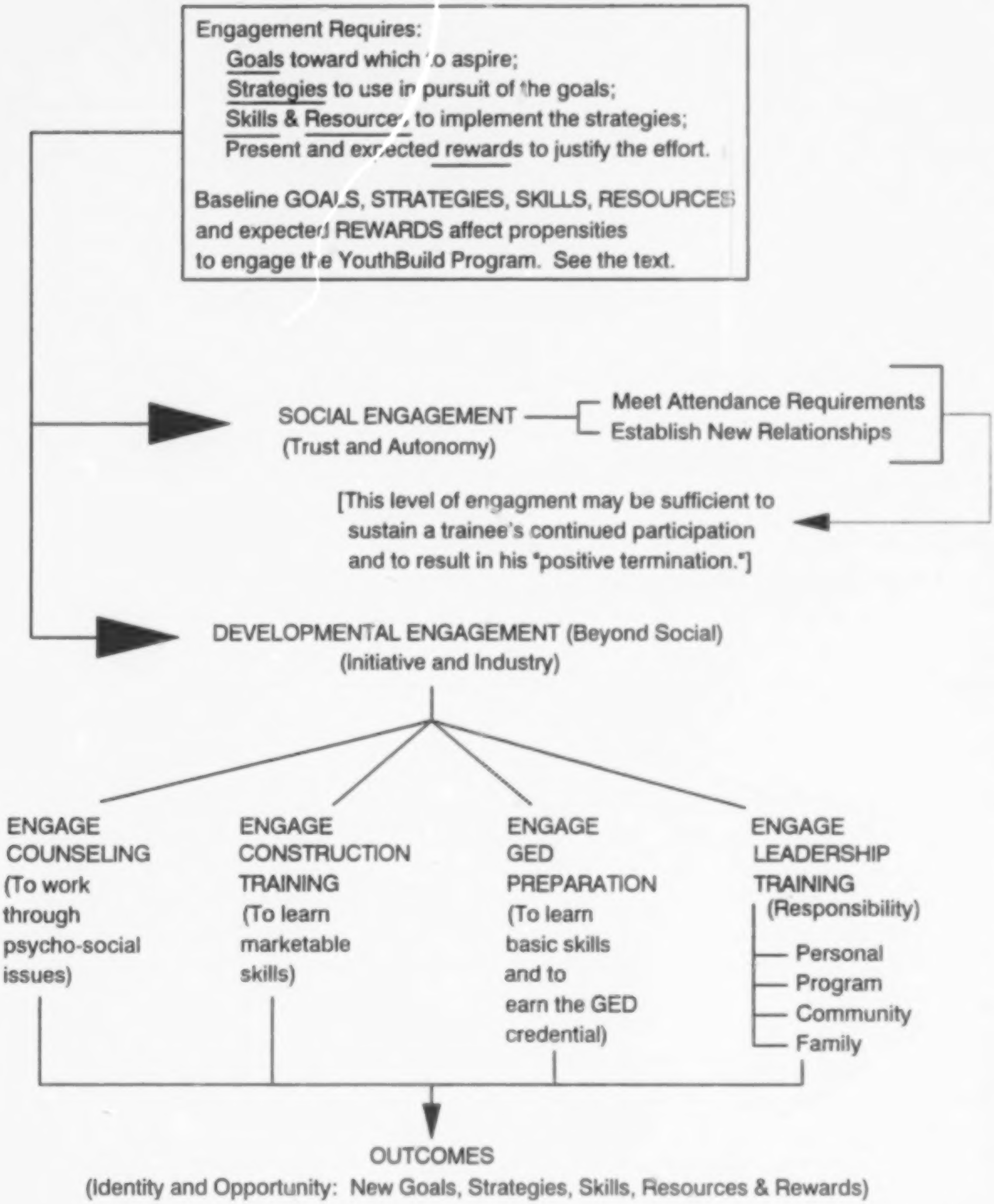
MEASURES

This section introduces base-line measures that chapter 6 uses to explain relationships and

FIGURE 5.2

THE CONCEPTUAL SCHEME FOR QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF YOUTHBUILD PROGRAM

(See Related Diagram for Qualitative Analysis)



Engagement Requires:
Goals toward which to aspire;
Strategies to use in pursuit of the goals;
Skills & Resources to implement the strategies;
Present and expected rewards to justify the effort.

Baseline GOALS, STRATEGIES, SKILLS, RESOURCES and expected REWARDS affect propensities to engage the YouthBuild Program. See the text.

SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT
(Trust and Autonomy)
Meet Attendance Requirements
Establish New Relationships

[This level of engagment may be sufficient to sustain a trainee's continued participation and to result in his "positive termination."]

DEVELOPMENTAL ENGAGEMENT (Beyond Social)
(Initiative and Industry)
ENGAGE COUNSELING
(To work through psycho-social issues)
ENGAGE CONSTRUCTION TRAINING
(To learn marketable skills)
ENGAGE GED PREPARATION
(To learn basic skills and to earn the GED credential)
ENGAGE LEADERSHIP TRAINING
(Responsibility)
Personal
Program
Community
Family
OUTCOMES
(Identity and Opportunity: New Goals, Strategies, Skills, Resources & Rewards)

attendance, chapter 7 uses to explain positive terminations and GED completions and chapter 8 uses for simulations. In addition, the section headed "Goals" tabulates reasons for joining and staying with YouthBuild. The tabulations are included here because of their likely interest for readers. However, as base-line goals, only GED completion and construction training enter in the statistical analysis that later chapters report.

Later chapters introduce a few additional measures from surveys conducted after the program began. The index for relationships, and measures of absenteeism, positive terminations and GED completions are introduced in chapters 6 and 7.

Goals

YouthBuild trainees pursue some goals through their participation in YouthBuild, and others through activities that sometimes compete with YouthBuild on the outside. The goals for which we have measures in the statistical analysis are those regarding construction training and GED completion that trainees pursue though YouthBuild. Note, however, that some of the life styles and strategy beliefs that we measure below affect commitments to additional goals beyond these two, both inside and outside of YouthBuild.

This study has two sources of data concerning goals. Both are surveys on which respondents rated the importance of several items. For both, these are items that officials at YouthBuild USA and the participants that we consulted while designing the survey identified to be important. One survey is the "YouthBuild Base-Line Questionnaire on Life Style and Attitudes." Trainees completed this questionnaire on the first day of the orientation period.[12] It was administered only to trainees who began the program at the start of the full regular cycle.[13] Each respondent rated the importance of each item for his or her decision to join the program. Table 5.1 shows answers for each question, pooled across all trainees who completed the questionnaire. The numbers on each line sum to 100 percent. GED preparation is the answer that attracted the most responses in the "most important" category (71.29 percent, among high school dropouts who did not have GEDs already). Half of all respondents checked "Most Important" for construction training.

---

[12] By that time, participants have no reason to expect that their answers will affect their admission. Each questionnaire comes with an envelope in which the trainee seals his or her completed questionnaire and then signs across the seal. Staff members who administer the survey assure trainees that their answers are confidential and that no one at the program site will see them.

Another source of answers concerning why youth participate is the "Survey for Young People," hereafter referred to as the youth opinion (YOP) survey. Staff administered this survey first around the fourth month and again around the eighth month of the program. The overall pattern of answers was quite stable between the fourth and eighth months. Names were optional and most trainees chose to remain anonymous.[14] Among other things, the YOP survey asked respondents to "rank the importance of the following parts of the program." Table 5.2 shows their responses. While some trainees left the program before the fourth month, making the samples for Tables 5.1 and 5.2 non-identical, the two tables are highly consistent, with one apparent exception.

Specifically, the most glaring difference between Tables 5.1 and 5.2 concerns compensation. Even though "to get paid" attracted only 8.49 percent in the highest category on Table 5.1, "getting paid" garnered 82 percent of the top category on Table

---

[13] YouthBuild is not an open-entry open-exit program; it has fixed starting and ending dates. Hence, the evaluation team had no reason to expect at the beginning that programs would make mid-cycle admissions. Staff at the sites did not immediately notify the evaluation team when they made such admissions. In the future, provisions should be made to administer all base-line data collection instruments to all entrants, independent of when they enter program. This was particularly a problem for one site where fairly large groups started the program at mid-year, on a time-table that was not clearly communicated to the evaluation team. Overall, 259 youth completed the questionnaire of a total 360 participants during the demonstration. Demographic data are complete, as are data on felony records. Late collection of base-line attitude and life style data would have been less appropriate.

[14] In hindsight, not asking trainees to provide their names was a mistake. We should have provided envelopes in the way that we did for the base-line and end-of-program surveys. Without trainees' names, we cannot match individuals' YOP surveys with their base-line and end-of-program surveys. However, for specific variables, we can, and do, match averages for site-years to the records in the data for individual trainees.

5.2. The inconsistency is illusory. What Table 5.1 reports is that getting paid was not an important reason that trainees joined YouthBuild. Once in the program, however, getting paid versus not getting paid takes on a very important and specific meaning: sites use variations in rates of pay as rewards (or punishments) for good (or bad) attendance and behavior. The program establishes that a paycheck is something to which the trainee has a "right" as long as he or she lives up to his or her obligations.[15]

Finally, it is worth noting that being politically active and being on an advisory or policy committee rank at the bottom of the list. Other sections of this report address the role of the Youth Policy Committee in the YouthBuild program. The fact that only 19.15 percent of trainees indicate that membership on the committee is "Very Important" does not mean necessarily that the committee is unimportant to the life of the program. The 19.15 percent number does, however, place membership on the committee in perspective. It shows that for all but roughly one-fifth of the trainees, potential membership on the committee ranks low among the other priorities.

The most salient and specific goal-related items in table 6.1 are GED preparation and construction training. YouthBuild emphasizes preparation for the GED and training in construction skills as two of its core program components. The other core components are leadership training and counseling. Analysis not shown in this report demonstrates that measured goals other than those associated with the GED or construction training were not important predictors for the outcomes upon which we focus.

An item in another part of the base-line survey asks about the expected likelihood of obtaining a high school degree or a GED by ten years into the future. We combine that

---

[15] For example, a trainee provided clarification: "I didn't come here for the money [as in Table 1]. But, now that I'm here, I feel like they owe me my money and they'd better give it to me [as in Table 2]." In addition, most trainees acknowledge that the money comes in handy for covering transportation and other living expenses. YouthBuild consumes the time during the daytime in which they might earn money otherwise. Moreover, work on the construction site often leaves them too tired to earn money in the evening. Hence, they need the stipend.

TABLE 5.1

IMPORTANCE OF VARIOUS REASONS FOR JOINING YOUTHBUILD
TABULATED FROM RESPONSES TO BASELINE QUESTIONNAIRE
(Percentages: Each Row Adds to 100)

	DOESN'T APPLY	NOT IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	MOST IMPORTANT
Column:	1	2	3	4	5
GED PREPARATION (Dropouts)	3.96	0.00	6.44	18.32	71.29
POSITIVE USE OF MY TIME	1.16	2.32	11.20	27.80	57.53
CONSTRUCTION TRAINING	0.39	3.47	17.37	29.35	49.42
PROGRAM SEEMED "FOR REAL"	0.38	1.92	22.22	36.40	39.08
YB BUILDS NEEDED HOUSING	1.54	2.70	21.62	36.68	37.46
TREATED WELL ON 1ST VISIT	1.92	4.62	25.77	36.92	30.76
PARENT ENCOURAGED ME	36.43	10.47	21.32	14.34	17.44
NEW FRIENDS&POSITIVE PEOPLE	3.07	13.41	33.72	32.56	17.24
IT LOOKED LIKE FUN	7.00	29.96	33.46	19.46	10.12
TO GET PAID	46.33	14.29	19.69	11.20	8.49
MY FRIENDS JOINED	54.72	27.17	7.87	7.09	3.15
JUDGE SAID I HAD TO	82.63	8.11	3.47	3.09	2.70

n=259

Note: Most trainees checked "Most Important" for several items.

Table 5.2

RATING THE IMPORTANCE OF VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THE PROGRAM TABULATED FROM YOUTH OPINION SURVEYS ADMINISTERED AT APPROX. 4 MONTHS
(Percentages: Each Row Adds to 100)

	NOT IMPORTANT	O.K.	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT
Column:	1	2	3	4
Learning to Keep a Job	0.44	1.31	11.35	86.90
Improving Reading and Math	0.43	0.85	13.68	85.04
Getting Paid	0.43	3.43	14.16	81.97
Getting a GED	6.90	5.17	9.05	78.88
Getting Some Kind of Job	0.00	3.90	17.75	78.35
Being Part of a Positive Group	0.85	4.27	30.77	64.10
Learning the History of People of Color	1.28	15.74	20.43	62.55
Building Housing for Homeless People	0.00	9.01	30.47	60.52
Getting a Driver's License	9.09	7.36	28.57	54.98
Learning Construction Skills	0.85	11.06	34.47	53.62
Getting a Job in Construction	5.13	21.37	26.50	47.01
Talking with a Counselor	2.99	32.05	34.62	30.34
Talking with Other Trainees	3.95	25.88	41.23	28.95
Being Politically Active	11.26	30.30	33.77	24.68
Being on an Advisory or Policy Committee	13.62	34.04	33.19	19.15

n=235

Note: This table is from the same survey items as table 4.3 in chapter 4. The numbers are slightly different because table 4.3 pools responses from both administrations of the survey during the second cycle of the demonstration, while this table pools responses from the first administration of the survey for both cycles.

measure together with the GED preparation item from table 5.1. The result is a standardized index called "want & expect GED." It measures the importance of GED completion as a goal in our statistical analysis.[16] Similarly, the variable measuring the importance of construction training, called "want construction training," is a scaled and standardized version of the item in table 5.1.[17]

Recall that knowing strategies to apply in the pursuit of goals is among the conditions that foster "engagement." Admittedly, the measures that we define below are not tightly coupled to the goals of earning the GED and learning construction skills. Instead, they are general beliefs that should have broad relevance.

Strategy Beliefs

"Strategy beliefs" are beliefs about ways of getting what one wants. A person who knows what he or she wants but has mistaken beliefs about the recipe for getting it is unlikely to succeed. The base-line survey on life styles and attitudes includes a set of very general items concerning recipes for economic success. Specifically, the section asks trainees to respond to the following instruction, "For each line below, indicate how important you think the item will be in determining how much money you make in your life." The options are, "Not Important," "Sort of Important" and "Very Important." We call these items strategy beliefs and we hypothesize that such beliefs should affect behavior. Further, we assume that general beliefs about success at earning money carry over to beliefs about success in other domains. Hence, we use the answers to these items to construct indices of "strategy beliefs" for use throughout the analysis below.

---

[16] Both here and below, unless otherwise indicated, each of the indices constructed from the base-line questionnaire is standardized to have a mean of zero and a standard deviation of 1 across the pooled sample from the ten site-years. When an index combines one or more items, we first standardize each item, add and then standardize the sum.

[17] Due to the anonymity of the YOP survey, we cannot match responses from Table 2 to trainees' base-line questionnaires. Of course, we can match the average for the site-year, but this is unnecessary for measuring goals since we have the base-line survey.

Table 5.3A summarizes the components of five indices that we collapse into two for later use. The indices are: CHANCE, EFFORT, KNOWLEDGE, NICE and CONTROL. CONTROL equals (EFFORT + KNOWLEDGE)/2 minus CHANCE.[18] Thus, the highest values of CONTROL are for participants who believe a lot in the efficacy of effort and knowledge and very little in the importance of chance.

CHANCE represents a combination of four items that connote external sources of control. The items are: your race or ethnicity; luck; how much money your family had when you were growing up; and who you marry. What these four things have in common is that they absolve the respondent of direct responsibility for outcomes through his or her own efforts. As with the other indices that we create below, the dominant criterion for selecting items to combine into an index is that all have a close logical relationship to the idea that the index is trying to capture.[19] Table 5.3A summarizes the four items that comprise the index for CHANCE. For each of the four items, answers are rather evenly distributed among the three forced-choice options.

Answers to items in the index for EFFORT are much more skewed than for CHANCE. Because each of the four components is skewed, so is the index. Nevertheless, composite index is below its peak value for more than 20 percent of respondents. While 20 is a relatively small percentage, it represent a non-trivial number of youth. Since 259 youth completed the baseline survey, 20 percent represents more than fifty participants.

The two items representing belief in the strategic important of knowledge include

---

[18] The Cronbach's alpha for the items in EFFORT and KNOWLEDGE combined is a respectable 0.70, with an inter-item correlation of .283. Since the index for CHANCE has only 4 items (among which the average inter-item correlation is .211), its Cronbach's alpha is lower, at .52.

[19] The exception is that belief in luck is not highly correlated with belief in effort and knowledge. Still, we combine (EFFORT+ KNOWLEDGE)/2 minus LUCK into one index called CONTROL. Conceptually, one expects that the belief that taking control is an effective strategy should be higher among youth who believe that effort and knowledge are important and that luck is not.

TABLE 5.3A: BASE-LINE STRATEGY BELIEFS

TABULATIONS OF BASE-LINE ITEMS
THAT COMBINE TO FORM INDICES OF STRATEGY BELIEFS
(Percentages: Each Row Adds to 100)

Panel 1: **CHANCE**

	NOT IMPORTANT	SORT OF IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT
Luck:	29.08	41.43	29.48
Your Race or Ethnicity:	27.76	34.29	37.96
How Much Money Your Family Had When You Were Growing Up:	56.47	29.02	14.51
Who You Marry:	35.04	24.02	40.94

Panel 2: **EFFORT**

	NOT IMPORTANT	SORT OF IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT
Hard Work and Planning:	1.27	5.88	92.94
How Hard You Try:	1.18	6.27	92.55
How Responsible You Are:	0.78	5.47	93.75
How Motivated You Are:	1.56	10.94	87.50

Panel 3: **KNOWLEDGE**

	DOESN'T APPLY TO ME	ALMOST NEVER	ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH	ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK	ALMOST EVERYDAY
Read a Newspaper:	6.13	10.73	14.18	31.80	37.16

	NOT IMPORTANT	SORT OF IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT
Knowledge:	0.00	7.84	92.16

Panel 4: **NICE**

	NOT IMPORTANT	SORT OF IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT
Honesty:	3.13	11.33	85.55
How Friendly You Are:	7.42	32.03	60.55
How Much You Respect People:	3.20	20.00	76.80

Panel 5: **CONTROL** = (EFFORT+KNOWLEDGE)/2 - CHANCE

one from the same section of the questionnaire as above and another from the section on time use. The one from the same section as above is simply the item "knowledge," in the battery about factors that affect future income. The other concerns how often the respondent reads a newspaper. Our assumption here is that youth who read newspapers believe, more than others do, that knowledge has strategic importance.[20] Our other index of strategy beliefs is named NICE. NICE measures beliefs about the importance of being honest, friendly and respectful.[21] The percent answering "Not Important" or "Sort of Important" is 14.46 percent for "Honesty," 39.45 percent for "How Friendly You Are," and 23.20 percent for "How Much You Respect People." These cause the index for NICE to be substantially less concentrated at the top values than for the EFFORT.

A table at the end of this chapter reports correlations among all of the indices that table 5.3A defines.[22]

Base-Line Skill Levels

Lacking a better indicator for basic skills, we use the answer to a question that asked respondents to rate the importance of reading and math skills as a barrier to employment. It asked, "When you have trouble getting a legal job, how important [is each of] the following: ..." "Difficulty with reading or math" was one of the items. The choices were "important," "sort of important" or "not important." In our sample, 29 percent answered "not important," 28 percent answered "sort of important" and 44 percent answered "very important."[23] This set of answers is the basis for the variable named BASIC SKILLS in what follows. It is in fact a very strong predictor. Analysis reported in chapter 7 finds that this variable is the most statistically significant in the analysis for predicting who completes the GED from among the high school dropouts in YouthBuild.

---

[20] The highest correlation between the frequency of reading newspapers and any item in the index for EFFORT is a correlation of 0.285 with "how motivated you are." The correlation between reading newspapers and the overall index for EFFORT is 0.20. The correlation for the single item for knowledge (not the composite of the two items) and EFFORT is 0.49. The correlation of the two-item index for knowledge and the index for effort is 0.46. The correlation between the frequency of reading newspapers and the single item for knowledge is .10 and not statistically significant, but it is not clear how to interpret this because the single item for knowledge is so highly concentrated at its top value. Future attempts to measure these ideas must find ways of producing more spread in the distribution of answers.

[21] The item "how much you respect people" was added to the questionnaire only after the first year. Hence, we used data from the second year to estimate an ordered probit regression that we then used to predict the answers to replace the missing values. In this ordered probit regression, the right-hand-side variables are the answers to "honest," "how friendly you are" and "self control" from the same battery of questions, and the dependent variable is "how much you respect people." We then used the estimated coefficients together with data from the first year to predict the answer to "how much you respect people" for the first year. The tabulation for "how much you respect people" shown in Table 3A represents only those youth who actually answered the question -- those surveyed after the first year of the demonstration.

[22] Correlations in this table do not include trainees who were not present to do the base-line survey on life style and attitudes. If missing values were replaced by site-year averages, and correlations calculated for the full sample with missing values replaced, the measured correlations would change by small amounts but the basic story in the correlations would not.

Rewards and Base-Line Life Styles

Above, when introducing the idea that rewards are important inducements to engagement, we asserted that rewards are important along basic human motive dimensions. These dimensions include drives to experience, for example, affiliation, influence and achievement. People gravitate to settings and activities that provide satisfaction of these fundamental varieties.

Some trainees come with life styles that produce rewards in ways are inconsistent with success in the YouthBuild program but difficult to abandon. We hypothesize, for example, that success in YouthBuild is not easily compatible with daily participation in night life on the street, whether this includes just hanging out or perhaps hustling for income on the wrong side of the law. From interviews, we know that some youth try to succeed simultaneously in YouthBuild and on the streets. Few pull it off. As a Program Manager in Boston expressed it, "To be successful on the streets you've got to stay alert.

---

[23] Trainees at all of the sites in the demonstration completed some type of base-line test of basic reading and math skills. However, an agreement was discussed but never struck with the sites to provide scores as data for the present study. It would seem that such data should be easy to compile even after the fact, but this was not the case. Hence, we lack a direct measure of base-line skills to use in the statistical analysis.

160

You have to keep your edge. The same is true for success in YouthBuild. You can't work the streets until 2 a.m. and be at YouthBuild ready to work by 8. It's hard and it's dangerous. You lose your edge. When you lose your edge on the street, you die."[24]

Most trainees who last through YouthBuild report in interviews that by an explicit decision or, it seems more frequently, by a gradual drifting away, they ultimately abandoned any regular reliance on "the street" for the types of fulfillment that we associate here with affiliation, influence or achievement. YouthBuild helps them to establish a new life rhythm and provides more wholesome sources of satisfaction and self realization. This theme from interviews is supported by statistically significant changes in time-use that the data show for youth who finish the program (see chapter 10).

The base-line indices that measure life style (and, implicitly, reliance on the associated reward structures) are summarized in table 5.3B. Most come from a set of items on the base-line survey that responded to the following: "In the past few months, how often did you: ..." These are measures of life style in the months immediately preceding entry to the YouthBuild program. Each variable has a clear relationship to the types of conventionality in behavior that most people associate with success in mainstream society. KIDCARE, for example, combines two items from the base-line survey: the frequency of baby-sitting and the frequency of efforts to set good examples for children.[25] In interviews, trainees frequently cite commitment to children as a strong motivating force to put their lives in order.

A related index is the dichotomous variable, FELONY CONVICTION, that equals 1 for youth with convictions and 0 for youth without convictions (self reported). Table 5.3B

---

[24] At the time of this quote, a trainee had recently been shot matter-of-factly on the street by a child not over 15 years old, sent by his "employer" to collect on a drug debt. Observers speculated that if the trainee had been more alert during the encounter he might still be alive.

[25] The simple correlation between baby-sitting and trying to set good examples for children is 0.30.

TABLE 5.3B: BASE-LINE MEASURES OF LIFE STYLE

TABULATIONS OF BASE-LINE ITEMS
THAT COMBINE TO FORM LIFESTYLE INDICES
(Percentages: Each Row Adds to 100)

Panel 1: **KIDCARE**

	DOESN'T APPLY TO ME	ALMOST NEVER	ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH	ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK	ALMOST EVERYDAY
Baby-sit?	36.15	16.15	11.15	16.54	20.00
Try to Set Good Example for a Child?	8.49	9.27	8.88	10.81	62.55

Panel 2: **MARIJUANA**

	DOESN'T APPLY TO ME	ALMOST NEVER	ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH	ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK	ALMOST EVERYDAY
Use Marijuana:	56.37	15.44	10.04	9.65	8.50

Panel 3: **FELONY CONVICTION**

	No	Yes
Felony Conviction:	72.50	27.50

Panel 4: **HANGOUT**

	NONE	ONE	TWO OR THREE	FOUR OR FIVE	SIX OR MORE
Hanging Out: (Hours Per Day)	18.85	12.69	20.38	21.54	26.53

	DOESN'T APPLY TO ME	ALMOST NEVER	ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH	ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK	ALMOST EVERYDAY
Hang Out with Friends During the Day:	9.23	12.69	11.92	28.46	37.69

Panel 5: **YEARS OF SCHOOLING**

	8 Yrs	9 Yrs	10 Yrs	11 Yrs	12 Yrs
Highest Grade Completed	2.54	16.51	25.71	30.16	25.08

Table 5.4 shows percentiles for the indices introduced above. All are scaled to have means of 0 and standard deviations of 1.

TABLE 5.4

DISTRIBUTIONS FOR INDICES CREATED FROM THE BASE LINE QUESTIONNAIRE[26] ON LIFE STYLES AND ATTITUDES

Percentiles:	1ST	5TH	10TH	25TH	50TH	75TH	90TH	95TH	99TH
Indices:									
MARIJUANA	-0.83	-0.83	-0.83	-0.83	-0.23	0.19	1.87	2.77	2.77
KIDCARE	-2.47	-1.96	-1.45	-0.44	0.07	0.57	1.59	1.59	1.59
AMBITION	-4.06	-1.76	-0.77	-0.24	0.27	0.43	0.82	0.82	0.82
NICE	-4.14	-2.09	-1.17	-0.36	0.06	0.80	0.90	0.90	0.90
WANT CONSTRUCTION	-2.86	-1.57	-1.57	-0.29	0.15	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99
EFFORT	-4.66	-1.97	-0.80	0.26	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42
CHANCE	-2.26	-1.65	-1.14	-0.46	0.07	0.44	1.39	1.99	2.65
CONTROL	-3.49	-1.71	-1.14	-0.51	0.07	0.53	1.13	1.50	1.93
HANGOUT	-2.15	-1.87	-1.67	-0.81	0.02	0.64	1.46	1.46	1.46
KNOWLEDGE	-4.67	-2.04	-1.01	-0.36	0.30	0.48	0.96	0.96	0.96
WANT&EXPECT GED	-5.03	-2.58	-1.34	-0.32	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70

shows that more than one-quarter of YouthBuild trainees report felony convictions. An additional variable, HANGOUT, represents the frequency of "hanging out." It combines hours per day and days per week or month, etc.[27]

Measures of age, race and sex are control variables -- they control indirectly for variables that are correlated with age, race and sex but for which we have no direct measures in the analysis. The frequency distribution of ages in the full sample is the following:

PERCENT:	1%	2%	11%	15%	16%	11%	12%	8%	11%	7%	2%	3%	2%
AGE:	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27

---

[26] For each index in this table, the average for the respective site-year replaces missing values for trainees who joined the program after the Base-Line Questionnaire on Life Styles and Attitudes was administered. Standardization to produce a mean of 0 and standard deviation of 1 is done on the full sample, including youth for whom missing values are replaced. The effect of replacing missing values in this fashion is to push the weight of the distribution further from the tails than would otherwise be the case, but it does not change the essential impressions that one gets from an inspection of the patterns.

[27] The simple correlation between the two items about hanging out is 0.68.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Hence, only 3 percent are younger than seventeen years old and only 7 percent are older than twenty four.

Eighty-five percent are males. Nine percent of all trainees are white non-Hispanic; 71 percent are African-American non-Hispanic; 12 percent are Hispanic; and the remaining 8 percent are distributed relatively evenly among Native Americans, Asian/Pacific Islanders, "multi-racial" and "other." Generally, the numbers of trainees in racial categories other than African American are not large enough to establish statistically reliable distinctions among the groups. Therefore, the variable for race in the statistical analysis controls only for whether the respondent is African American or not.

CORRELATIONS

To close this section, table 5.5 shows patterns of correlation among the indices that this chapter has introduced. Under each correlation in table 5.5 is a number in parenthesis. This number represents the estimated probability that the measured correlation would (by pure chance) have the observed value if the two variables were in fact unrelated.[28]

Among the more striking patterns in table 5.5 is that AGE is correlated with practically everything. The signs of the correlations indicate that older trainees are more conventional. Since these are cross-section and not longitudinal data, there is no way to be sure whether these correlations with age represent the effects of maturation or, alternatively, differences in the types of youth that sites recruit at different ages. There are reasons to believe that both explanations have validity.[29].

---

[28] The conventional standard is to adopt a probability value of either 0.100 (one in ten) or 0.050 (one in twenty) as a threshold for declaring a relationship to be "statistically significant." If the value is less than or equal to the threshold value (i.e., 0.100 or 0.050), then the correlation to which that probability value applies is said to be statistically significant or, equivalently, statistically distinguishable from zero.

[29] Cleveland, for example, selects older trainees, many of whom have high school degrees and are quite conventional in their life styles. Conversely, Tallahassee takes trainees who are younger. Based on interviews with staff and trainees, we suspect that trainees in Tallahassee, for example, may be less conventional in their life styles and strategy beliefs than Cleveland's recruits were even when they were younger.

Readers are invited to peruse table 5.5 in order to reach a fuller understanding of the relations between the various indices. Keep in mind that the numbers in table 5.4 are merely correlations. Take care in drawing causal interpretations.

We proceed now to chapter 6, where the topic is social engagement during the early months of the program. The measures of social engagement are ratings of staff-youth relationships and absenteeism

TABLE 5.5

CORRELATIONS AMONG BASELINE INDICES
(Prob. Values in Parentheses)

	AGE	YEARS OF SCHOOL	DROPOUT FROM HIGH SCH.	FELONY CONVIC-TION	WANTED CONSTR.	WANT & EXPECT GED
YEARS OF SCHOOLING	0.3469 (.000)					
DROPOUT (from HS)	-0.3615 (.000)	-0.6371 (.000)				
FELONY CONVICT'N	0.0773 (.143)	-0.0891 (.115)	0.0007 (.989)			
WANTED CONSTR'TN	0.2161 (.0005	0.1404 (.041)	-0.1764 (.004)	-0.0062 (.924)		
WANT&EX-PECT GED	0.1206 (.0898	0.0313 (.698)	...	-0.0274 (.718)	0.1488 (.036)	
KIDCARE	0.2566 (.000)	0.0253 (.714)	-0.0226 (.717)	-0.0768 (.241)	0.0701 (.263)	0.0136 (.849)
HANGOUT	-0.2770 (.000)	-0.0670 (.332)	0.0950 (.127)	-0.0294 (.654)	-0.1094 (.080)	-0.0030 (.966)
MARIJUANA	-0.0686 (.271)	-0.0185 (.789)	-0.0070 (.910)	-0.0093 (.886)	-0.1044 (.095)	-0.0277 (.698)
LUCK	0.0006 (.993)	-0.1225 (.089)	0.1064 (.100)	0.0078 (.909)	0.0472 (.470)	0.0089 (.905)
EFFORT	0.2254 (.000)	0.1741 (.012)	-0.1485 (.017)	-0.0463 (.484)	0.1319 (.036)	0.3187 (.000)
KNOWLEDGE	0.1782 (.004)	0.1075 (.122)	-0.1553 (.013)	-0.0445 (.500)	0.1041 (.099)	0.3382 (.000)
NICE	0.1070 (.087)	0.0349 (.616)	-0.0494 (.431)	-0.0193 (.769)	0.0721 (.253)	0.2338 (.001)
CONTROL	0.1758 (.006)	0.2172 (.002)	-0.2120 (.001)	-0.0300 (.662)	0.0618 (.346)	0.2562 (.000)

Continued next page.

TABLE 5.5, CORRELATIONS AMONG BASELINE INDICES, Continued.

	KIDCARE	HANGOUT	MARIJUANA	CHANCE	EFFORT	KNOWLEDGE	NICE
HANGOUT	-0.3151 (.000)						
MARIJUANA	-0.2059 (.001)	0.2867 (.000)					
CHANCE	0.0964 (.137)	0.0038 (.954)	-0.1253 (.053)				
EFFORT	0.1629 (.009)	-0.0194 (.759)	0.0269 (.670)	0.0082 (.900)			
KNOWLEDGE	0.0723 (.250)	-0.1685 (.007)	-0.0383 (.543)	-0.0069 (.915)	0.4645 (.000)		
NICE	0.1988 (.001)	-0.0812 (.197)	0.0935 (.136)	0.2601 (.000)	0.5420 (.000)	0.2888 (.000)	
CONTROL	0.0254 (.697)	-0.0760 (.245)	0.0853 (.191)	-0.7173 (.000)	0.5919 (.000)	0.5988 (.000)	0.1527 (.018)

CHAPTER 6

EARLY SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT:
Attendance and Relationships

"They weren't ready," is the most frequent explanation that staff and trainees give for why some participants drop out from YouthBuild. One sign that youth are not "ready" is that their attendance is lower and they form weaker bonds with members of the staff. This chapter reports on which of trainees' base-line characteristics help to predict their attendance and their relationships with members of the staff in the early months of the program. In later chapters, we use both relationships and absenteeism as explanatory variables for predicting positive terminations and GED completions.

MEASURING RELATIONSHIPS

In order to measure the quality of relationships, we asked each member of the staff to complete a "Staff-Youth Relationships Form" each month.[30] The form lists the names of all active trainees in a column on the left side of the page. It has six columns that represent various levels of interpersonal closeness. Each month, each member of the staff checks one column for each trainee. From left to right on the form, the labels on the columns are:

5. warm, close, open, positive;
4. cooperative, cordial;
3. neutral, OK;
2. distant;
1. tense, even hostile;

---

[30] In hindsight, we should have done more to measure relationships from the perspectives of youth. We have some information from youths' perspectives on the YOP and end of program surveys, but it is different from what we would collect if we did it again.

0. no relationship.

Staff are authorized to write percentages in the boxes to indicate mixed impressions. Thus, if a trainee is "cooperative, cordial" half of the time and "distant" the rest of the time, respondents can indicate this by writing 50 percent in each of the two columns. Inpractice, some use percentages in this way, but most simply check one column for each trainee each month. For any given month, the average rating that we compute for each trainee pools the responses from all of the staff.[31]

Pooling data for different months produces two composite indices of relationships for each trainee for use in the analysis below. The first is the average rating for each trainee for months 2 through 4. The second is the average for months 6 through 8.[32] To translate the ratings to numbers, we assign a value of 5 to the answer "warm, close, open, positive," a value of 4 to "cooperative and cordial," and so on down to a value of one for "tense, even hostile." Staff seldom check the "no relationship" answer. When they do, however, we take the response literally and do not include it in the trainee's average.

The distribution of ratings has enough variation to suggest that real differences exist among trainees in their relationships with members of the staff. For example, the distribution of ratings among trainees for months 2-4 is the following:

Percentile:	1st	5th	10th	25th	50th	75th	90th	95th	99th
Rating:	2.93	3.23	3.33	3.71	4.00	4.17	4.43	4.56	4.86

The mean is 3.92 and the standard deviation is 0.42. The distribution listed immediately above shows that the 10th percentile, at 3.33, is at about one-third of the way between "neutral, OK" and "cooperative, cordial." The fact that the 1st percentile is at 2.93 shows that very few trainees have ratings in the "distant" or "tense/hostile" columns. At the other end of the distribution, the 90th percentile is roughly half-way between "cooperative, cordial" and "warm, close, open, positive."[33]

---

[31] YouthBuild USA suggested to staff that they should use the relationships forms as diagnostic tools. For example, youth with an average rating of below 4 could be given special attention (though, of course, youth would not be told that low relationship ratings were the reason for any special treatment). We saw no evidence that any site ever used the forms for diagnostic purposes. They simply completed the forms and mailed them to the documentation team.

[32] When a site did not submit the report for all three months in the 2nd-4th or 6th-8th month interval, we simply averaged the months in that interval for which they reported.

PREDICTING RELATIONSHIPS

New relationships between participants and members of the staff in YouthBuild are products of what people bring from outside and the interpersonal dynamics that play out in the context of the program. The index of staff-youth relationships for months 2-4 is an index of new relationships. Each of the variables introduced in the previous chapter is among the potential predictors. Additional explanatory variables are introduced below.

Except for a few references in the footnotes, most of the discussion below refers to results from the multivariate statistical analysis. In contrast to correlations that consider only two variables at a time, the multivariate estimates predict staff-youth relationship ratings as a function of several factors simultaneously. Multivariate techniques permit estimation of how much a dependent variable (e.g., the STAFF-YOUTH RELATIONSHIP rating) is likely to change when a particular explanatory variable (e.g., NICE or KIDCARE) changes by 1, while holding other explanatory variables constant.

The multivariate estimates detailed in the appendix to the chapter show that strategy beliefs are the most statistically significant predictors of staff-youth relationships -- much more important than, say, life style. Trainees' beliefs about the importance of honesty, friendliness and respectfulness, as collapsed into the index that we call NICE, have the most consistent and statistically significant impact of all. CONTROL is important as well. Recall that CONTROL combines three other indices: (EFFORT + KNOWLEDGE)/2 minus CHANCE.[34] Considering NICE and CONTROL together, it appears that staff have better relationships early in the program with trainees who are more inclined to treat others well and who believe more than others in the efficacy of effort and knowledge and less in the importance of chance.

---

[33] The average change from months 2-4 to months 6-8 is 0.11 and statistically significant, based on the data for trainees who were in the sample at both times.

KIDCARE is another variable that usually has statistically significant impacts on relationships in the multivariate analysis. Since the estimates control explicitly for gender, the fact that KIDCARE remains statistically significant suggests that it is probably measuring something real about the propensity to care for others, even among males. (The estimates suggest that males have weaker relationships with staff members than females do.) Indeed, the positive correlation between KIDCARE and NICE (see table 6.1 below) indicates that KIDCARE is probably capturing something more general than simply concern for children. The correlations of KIDCARE with MARIJUANA and HANGOUT are negative and statistically significant, reinforcing the impression that KIDCARE is a more general indicator of conventionality.

A variable called "respondent skipped some questions" pertains to completion of the base-line survey on life styles and attitudes. When participants skipped questions on the survey, as about 7 percent did, we replaced the missing values with the average value for the site-year. "Respondent skipped some questions" is a control variable that adjusts for any systematic tendency of such participants to have different characteristics from others who did not skip questions. The consistently negative and statistically significant coefficient on this variable in equations predicting relationships is a signal of such

---

[34] Correlations show that EFFORT is the component of CONTROL most correlated with the relationship rating. However, EFFORT (from the base-line) is not correlated with later relationship ratings for months 6 to 8. This is what one should expect if the program causes changes in base-line attitudes regarding the efficacy of effort. Moreover, the difference in correlations at the two points in time is not due simply to attrition patterns, since the difference is present also for youth who are present throughout the period. Calculations not summarized in the table show that the correlation of EFFORT with relationships falls from .13 for months 2-4 to .02 at months 6-8, when the correlations include only the youth who stay.

TABLE 6.1

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN STAFF-YOUTH RELATIONSHIPS, YOUTHS' DAYS ABSENT AND BASE-LINE INDICES

(Prob. Values in Parentheses)

	RELATIONS MONTHS 2 to 4	RELATIONS MONTHS 6 to 8	CHANGE IN RELATIONS	PCT DAYS ABSENT MONTHS 2 AND 3	ABSENT >10 PCT MONTHS 2 AND 3	PCT DAYS ABSENT MONTHS 6 AND 7	CHANGE IN PCT DAYS ABSENT
RELATIONS MONTHS 6-8	0.3928 (.000)						
CHANGE IN RELATIONS	-0.2243 (.008)	0.6481 (.000)					
DAYS ABSENT MONTHS 2&3	-0.2396 (.000)	-0.1991 (.006)	-0.1349 (.109)				
ABSENT>10% MONTHS 2&3	-0.2378 (.000)	-0.1891 (.010)	-0.0519 (.539)	0.6924 (.000)			
DAYS ABSENT MONTHS 6&7	0.0395 (.615)	-0.1685 (.046)	-0.2320 (.008)	0.2416 (.001)	0.2723 (.000)		
CHANGE IN DAYS ABSENT	0.1121 (.152)	-0.0741 (.384)	-0.1966 (.026)	-0.4413 (.000)	-0.2066 (.005)	0.7641 (.000)	
KIDCARE	0.1624 (.012)	0.0777 (.389)	0.0573 (.529)	0.0914 (.180)	0.1266 (.063)	0.0587 (.481)	-0.0340 (.683)
HANGOUT	-0.1379 (.034)	-0.1195 (.184)	-0.0769 (.398)	0.0259 (.705)	0.0874 (.200)	0.1217 (.144)	0.0552 (.510)
MARIJUANA	-0.0406 (.535)	0.0194 (.829)	0.0667 (.461)	0.0932 (.171)	0.1340 (.048)	0.1350 (.103)	0.0375 (.652)
CHANCE	-0.0432 (.528)	-0.0205 (.828)	0.0446 (.638)	0.0937 (.189)	0.0827 (.246)	-0.1374 (.116)	-0.1749 (.044)
EFFORT	0.1834 (.005)	0.0399 (.661)	-0.0832 (.364)	-0.0522 (.449)	0.0009 (.989)	-0.0113 (.894)	-0.0350 (.679)
KNOWLEDGE	0.0229 0.7291	-0.0244 0.7877	-0.0693 0.4481	0.0521 0.4493	0.0791 (.250)	0.0279 0.7405	0.0044 0.9581
NICE	0.1928 (.003)	0.2720 (.002)	0.0524 (.566)	-0.1280 (.061)	-0.0649 (.345)	-0.2413 (.003)	-0.1629 (.051)
CONTROL	0.1227 (.073)	0.0049 (.958)	-0.0984 (.302)	-0.0800 (.264)	-0.0505 (.481)	0.1006 (.254)	0.1217 (.167)

Continued next page.

Table 6.1, Continued.

	RELATIONS MONTHS 2 to 4	RELATIONS MONTHS 6 to 8	CHANGE IN RELATIONS	PCT DAYS ABSENT MONTHS 2 AND 3	ABSENT >10 PCT MONTHS 2 AND 3	PCT DAYS ABSENT MONTHS 6 AND 7	CHANGE IN PCT DAYS ABSENT
AGE	0.0436	0.0407	0.1968	0.0613	0.0243	-0.0722	-0.1332
	(.474)	(.579)	(.018)	(.275)	(.664)	(.338)	(.076)
YEARS OF SCHOOLING	0.0955	0.0302	0.0164	-0.0607	-0.0827	-0.1016	-0.0288
	(.140)	(.704)	(.856)	(.318)	(.173)	(.206)	(.720)
FELONY CONVICTION	-0.0127	0.0226	0.0541	0.1027	0.1119	0.0757	0.0615
	(.836)	(.760)	(.522)	(.068)	(.047)	(.317)	(.417)
WANTED CONSTRUCTN	0.0524	-0.0758	0.0594	-0.0258	-0.0897	-0.1315	-0.0392
	(.423)	(.400)	(.514)	(.706)	(.189)	(.114)	(.639)
WANT&EXPECT GED	0.1034	-0.0768	-0.1005	-0.0469	0.0473	0.0664	0.0284
	(.172)	(.434)	(.310)	(.554)	(.551)	(.465)	(.755)

differences. In other words, trainees who skipped questions on the base-line survey are different from other trainees in ways that also tend to predict weaker relationships with members of the staff in early months of the program.

Other explanatory variables in the equations that predict relationships warrant special attention. We measure absenteeism for months 2 and 3 with a variable that equals 1 if the trainee was absent more than 10 percent of possible days in these months, and zero otherwise.[35] If the relationship between absenteeism and staff-youth relationships is reciprocal -- i.e., if each affects the other -- then a special statistical method should be applied to adjust the absenteeism variable before including it as a predictor of staff-youth relationships.[36] The appendix to this chapter discusses the way that we applied that method, and the assumptions upon which our application depends. While they must be taken tentatively for technical reasons, the findings are fully consistent with the intuitively most plausible hypothesis, that better attendance does lead to better staff-youth relationships.

A second set of independent variables that warrant special attention here are the "site-year effects." "Site-year effects" are dichotomous (1,0) variables, one for each site-year.[37] In the table that reports these results in the appendix, the presence of these variables in the estimated equation is indicated in the last row opposite the label "Site year effects." The N's in columns 1-4 indicate that the effects are not included. The Y's in columns 5, 6 and 7 indicate that they are.[38]

---

[35] Other ways of measuring absenteeism produce similar results, but this way cuts out a lot of the troublesome movement in the higher values of the continuous version of the absenteeism variable. For example, variations in days missed among trainees who are absent a lot, say between 40 and 60 percent of the time, is probably less important for predicting other outcomes than the same amount of variation among trainees who are absent much less, say between 5 and 25 percent of the time.

[36] The method is called "instrumental variables."

[37] Actually, only 9 such variables enter the estimated equation. The 10th site-year becomes the one relative to which the others are measured.

Estimated equations that include site-year effects explain roughly three times as much of the variation in staff youth relationship ratings, compared with otherwise equivalent equations that exclude site-year effects. In searching for reasons that site-year effects matter so much, we constructed two indices from the first Youth Opinion (YOP) Survey, introduced earlier.

One variable is "Directors care and rules are fair," constructed from two separate items on the survey: "The directors care," and "The policies and discipline are fair." Recall the "four trust questions" from chapter 5. "Directors care and rules are fair" relates to the first of the four trust questions (caring). A second variable, related to the second trust question (competence), is "Directors know what they're doing."

Since the YOP surveys did not require respondents to identify themselves by name or number, it is not possible to match responses to individual trainees. It is, however, possible to match each site-year's average response to the records of trainees from the respective site-year. The variables formed in this way have ten values in the sample, representing the ten site-years.

We tried including "Directors care and rules are fair" and "Directors know what they're doing" in equations instead of the site-year effects.[39] Adding them to the equation that has no site-year effects accounts for roughly half of the variation that the site-year effects would otherwise tend to capture. Half is a substantial fraction, since the site-year effects account for *everything* that differs among site-years and affects the dependent variable, other than the variables for which the equations explicitly control.

---

[38] The estimated coefficients for site-year effects are not shown on the Table.

[39] It would not work to include both the SITE-YEAR EFFECTS and the YOP variables simultaneously in the regression specification. The reason is that there would be "perfect co-linearity" (see any standard text on regression) between the YOP variables and the set of SITE-YEAR EFFECTS.

While "Directors care and rules are fair" is not at all a statistically significant predictor for relationship ratings, "Directors know what they're doing," is.

It was initially a surprise, however, to find that "Directors know what they're doing" predicts lower ratings on staff-youth relationships. The estimated effect is highly statistically significant. It was not difficult, however, based upon our knowledge from visits to the sites, to come up with a likely explanation.

Specifically, weaker directors and program managers may sometimes invest too much energy in friendliness and not enough in pushing youth to perform. It is probably easier to have warm, close, open and positive relationships when the director and staff are placing less pressure upon participants to perform. As discussed in a chapter 5 and again in chapter 9, youth for the first 4 to 5 months (according to Boston's staff) tend to be testing the program and mostly in a "social engagement" mode. How should staff respond? We know from interviews that sites differ in their philosophies concerning how task-oriented or even "pushy" to be with trainees. In addition, they differ in their estimation of the likely consequences of strictness.[40]

It is not entirely surprising to see that staff report the best relationships for the early months of the program at the same sites where trainees give the directors the lowest ratings for competence. More competent directors probably tend to be more demanding. *However, trainees do not interpret demands as a lack of caring*. The opposite tends to be true. While treating the staff as "pals," participants may nevertheless associate the absence of *appropriate* pressure with a lack of genuine caring or with management incompetence.

The correlations shown in table 6.2 provide supporting evidence. These are correlations across only ten observations, one for each site-year. Correlations calculated on such a small number of observations must be very high to be statistically significant[41]. The correlation between the average relationship rating by site-year and "The directors know what they're doing" (from the YOP survey) is -0.75 and very statistically significant. Hence, both in the simple correlations and in the multivariate estimates, higher site-averages for early staff-youth relationships align with trainee assessments that the directors are less competent.

---

[40] This can be a particular problem when sites are funded on the basis of the number of trainees retained in the program. Staff may back off for fear that being pushy will cause trainees to drop out, thereby causing the budget to be cut by funding agencies.

Other correlations in the same table provide additional information. Trainees completing the YOP survey rate the importance of various reasons for having good attendance. Ratings have four levels, from "very important" to "not important." The two most relevant items for the present discussion are: "I know if I don't I'll be in trouble," and "I know I'll be fired if I don't." As shown in table 6.2, the first of these two items is *positively* correlated with "The directors know what they're doing" (correlation 0.7059, prob. value 0.022), "The directors care" (correlation 0.5901, prob. value 0.072) and "The policies and discipline are fair" (correlation 0.2293, prob. value 0.524). The second item, "I know I'll be fired if I don't," is negatively correlated with the same three measures of management quality, though never at statistically significant levels.[42]

The difference in correlations for "I'll be in trouble" versus "I'll be fired" makes

---

[41] Remember that the numbers in parentheses below the correlations are "prob. values." For a correlation to be statistically significant, the associated prob. value should be at most 0.100, or below.

[42] If some sites had a greater tendency to check the extreme values than other sites did, then we could have high but spurious positive correlations among YOP items. This does not explain the correlations in table 7. The items "IF I DON'T I'LL BE in TROUBLE" and "I KNOW I'll BE FIRED IF I DON'T" appear beside one another on the questionnaire. Still, they have different patterns of correlation in table 7 and the correlation between the two in table 7 is only 0.1636.

Table 6.2

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN SITE-YEAR AVERAGES of STAFF-YOUTH RELATIONSHIPS, ABSENTEEISM AND YOUTH OPINIONS
N=10 SITE YEARS
(Prob. Values in Parentheses)

	RELA- TIONS MONTHS 2 to 4	PCT DAYS ABSENT MONTHS 2 AND 3	ABSENT >10 % MONTHS 2 AND 3	YOP1	YOP2	YOP3	YOP4
PCT DAYS ABSENT 2&3	0.1166 (.748)						
ABSENT >10% MONTHS 2&3	0.1464 (.685)	0.9191 (.000)					
YOP1	-0.7495 (.012)	-0.0063 (.986)	-0.1770 (.624)				
YOP2	-0.4890 (.151)	-0.5376 (.109)	-0.5607 (.091)	0.6807 (.030)			
YOP3	-0.4305 (.214)	0.0341 (.925)	-0.1054 (.771)	0.5732 (.083)	0.4798 (.160)		
YOP4	-0.4945 (.146)	0.0713 (.844)	-0.0462 (.899)	0.7059 (.022)	0.5901 (.072)	0.2293 (.524)	
YOP5	0.1954 (.588)	0.0086 (.981)	0.2530 (.480)	-0.3956 (.257)	-0.1500 (.679)	-0.3494 (.322)	0.1636 (.651)

Definitions:

YOP1	The directors know what they're doing.
YOP2	The directors care.
YOP3	The policies and discipline are fare.
YOP4	[I attend because] if it don't I'll be in trouble.
YOP5	[I attend because] I know I'll be fired if I don't.

sense in the context of what we have learned from interviews. As YouthBuild sites become more experienced and sophisticated, they back away from threatening to fire youth for any but the most egregious infractions. Instead, they impose various social and material incentives. Wage bonuses and penalties figure most prominently. Disciplinary "discussions" are also standard practice.[43]

Trainees want structure in the early months of the program. They *want to expect* that people will be "in trouble" (but not too quickly fired) if they break the rules. At two sites during the first year of the demonstration project trainees took it upon themselves in roughly the third month of the program to help the director initiate a review of disciplinary procedures because it seemed to them that participants were "getting away with too much." Youth were testing the program but staff were not rigorously enforcing penalties. Sometimes it was because the director did not want to give up on certain youth whom the rules suggested should have been dismissed from the program. The process of reviewing procedures produced new ideas about how to handle disciplinary matters. This gave the directors, the staff and the participants' own Youth Policy Committee more tools with which to control the program.

---

[43] In interviews, the times that trainees speak disapprovingly about wage penalties is when the rules have changed abruptly without prior announcement and, therefore, without allowing them to adjust their behaviors in time to avoid the penalties.

Keep in mind that the last few paragraphs concern differences among sites, not individual trainees. A higher relationship rating for any individual trainee compared to the average for his or her site seems unambiguously to be a good thing. It probably indicates that he is more constructively engaged with the program than other trainees at the same site who have lower ratings. The fact that not only NICE, but also CONTROL are statistically significant and positive predictors of staff-youth relationship ratings reinforces this interpretation. However, as the findings here suggest, a high average relationship rating for an entire site may sometimes be a signal of collective work avoidance, albeit in a climate of good feelings.[44]

PREDICTING ABSENTEEISM

Attendance in months 2 and 3 is an additional measure of social engagement for the early months of the YouthBuild program. YouthBuild is a full-time program. It meets five days a week. We know the percentage of days each month that each trainee attends.[45] Figure 6.1 shows the distribution of attendance for months 2 and 3, showing that roughly one third of trainees attended at least 90 percent of the possible days during these two months of the YouthBuild demonstration.

---

[44] Though we do not explore this in the paper, some of the higher ratings from staff may reflect staff laziness at some sites in completing the survey. This would not be inconsistent with the negative correlations between youth's opinions on the YOP and the staff's ratings of relationships.

Most of the analysis below uses a dichotomous measure of absenteeism. It equals 1 if a trainee is missing more than 10 percent of the days, and 0 otherwise. Above, table 6.1 shows correlations for both the continuous absenteeism variable (4th column) and for the dichotomous variable (5th column). The correlations are similar for the two.

Correlations in table 6.1 above suggest that absenteeism is higher for youth who have less conventional behaviors (by mainstream standards) and for those who have responsibilities for child care. Being absent more than 10 percent of the time is correlated in the expected direction with MARIJUANA and FELONY CONVICTION.[46] At the same time, the positive correlation with KIDCARE suggests that responsibilities for child care may be interfering with attendance. None of the YouthBuild sites in the demonstration provided structured assistance with child care.

In contrast to the statistical significance of its correlations with life style (i.e., marijuana use, felony convictions and child care responsibilities), absenteeism is correlated with neither strategy beliefs nor goals.

The patterns that appear in the simple correlations do not disappear when we move to the multivariate analysis. The measured effects for NICE and CONTROL in the multivariate analysis for absenteeism are always that higher values produce less absenteeism, as basic

---

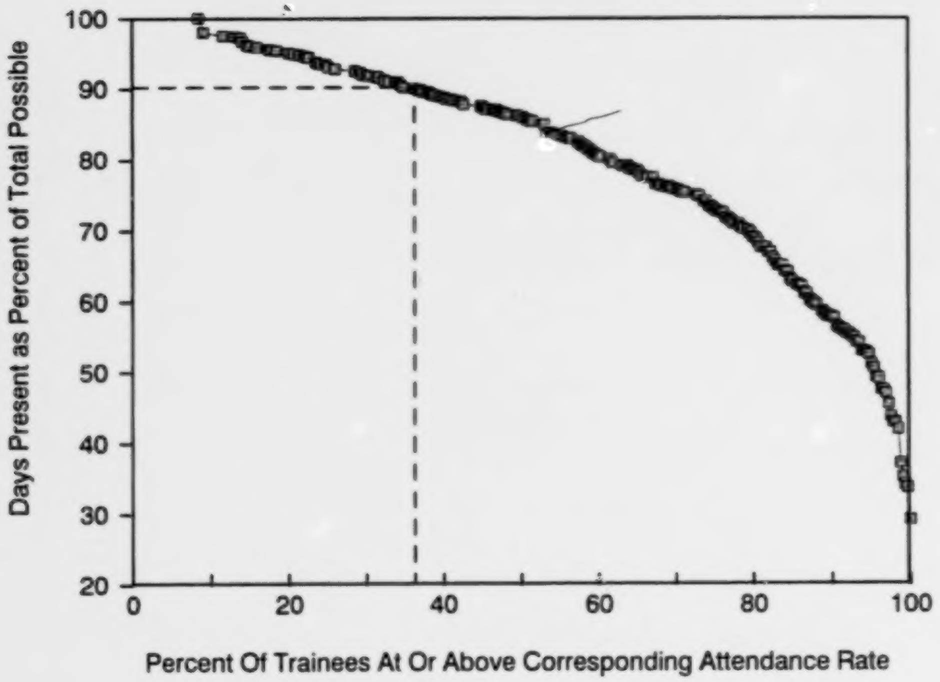
[45] From the data collected we know days attended but not maximum days possible. Therefore, to construct an attendance rate we assumed that each site has at least one trainee each month who has perfect attendance for the month. We know from our visits to the sites that this is not an unreasonable assumption. Hence, for each month, the attendance rate for each trainee measures attendance as a percentage of the days attended by the trainee(s) with the most days attended for that month.

[46] Using a prob. value of 0.100 as the threshold.

FIGURE 6.1

DAYS PRESENT AS PERCENT OF TOTAL POSSIBLE FOR SECOND AND THIRD MONTHS OF PARTICIPATION

Cummulative Distribution
for Attendance at Demonstration Sites



Source: Calculated from data submitted by YouthBuild sites on days present for individual trainees for first and second cycles of YouthBuild Demonstration Project.

reasoning would predict, but similar to what the simple correlations showed, these effects are not statistically significant. The same lack of statistical significance applies to the goal-related variables for GEDs and construction training. Conversely, the indices related to life style -- MARIJUANA, HANGOUT, FELONY CONVICTION and KIDCARE -- have estimated effects that are statistically significant. (See the appendix to this chapter for more technical details and the table of coefficients.)

Examples in table 6.3, below, are constructed from multivariate estimates shown in the appendix. They show just how important MARIJUANA, HANGOUT and FELONY CONVICTION can be for predicting good attendance.[47] For example, consider trainees who do not have felony convictions and whose use of MARIJUANA and propensity to HANGOUT are low -- at the 10th percentile. (Assume that the same trainees are otherwise average.) The analysis predicts that roughly half of trainees with this profile will attend the program for at least 90 percent of the days that the program operates in months 2 and 3 (see table 6.3, column 1). On the other hand, trainees at the 90th percentile for MARIJUANA and HANGOUT and who also have felony convictions are likely to achieve 90 percent attendance in the second and third months of the program less than ten percent of the time (see table 6.3, column 6).

To review why life style should be important for predicting attendance, recall the role of rewards in our model of engagement. Rewards include not only material incentives but, as introduced above, they also include satisfactions on basic human motive dimensions such as affiliation, influence, achievement and security. We know from interviews that some trainees find it difficult to abandon alternative reward systems. They find it difficult to leave their *friends*, their *influence* on the street, the *security* of old routines, and the feelings of *competence and achievement* that they experience when doing what they have learned to do best. Trainees who do not depend on the street life for fulfillment during the months leading up to YouthBuild are typically more single-mindedly focused on YouthBuild and they achieve better records of attendance.

---

[47] The estimates in Table 7 are constructed from the coefficients in column 4 of Table 8, and information about the distribution of the independent variables presented above.

TABLE 6.3

Estimated Probability that Trainee Exceeds 90 Percent Attendance Months 2&3 at Different Levels for the Variables MARIJUANA, HANGOUT and FELONY

Column:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Percentiles for MARIJUANA and HANGOUT:	10th	25th	50th	75th	90th	75th	90th
FELONY CONVICTION:	no	no	no	no	no	yes	yes
Predicted Likelihood that Trainee has 90% or Better Attendance Months 2&3:	.53	.46	.37	.30	.17	.19	.09

While trainees' characteristics are important, it also appears that sites vary systematically in the effectiveness of the methods that they use to achieve better attendance and in the priority that they place on it. Findings here (see the appendix) reenforce what seemed apparent during site visits: differences across the sites in average attendance levels are more reflective of unmeasured differences among the sites than of measured differences among trainees, even though trainees' characteristics do matter as discussed above.

The YOP variables "Directors care and rules are fair" and "Directors know what they're doing" help us again, as in the discussion of relationships, to explore possible reasons that sites achieve different results. The YOP variable "Directors know what they're doing" does not have a statistically significant effect on absenteeism. However, the other variable -- "Directors care and rules are fair" -- does. Other things equal, attendance is better (absenteeism lower) when more trainees agree that the directors care and the rules are fair.

Finally, recall the discussion above concerning absenteeism as a predictor of relationships. As the earlier discussion explained, reasons exist to believe that absenteeism affects relationships and that relationships affect absenteeism. Our findings on this point remain tentative because of methodological issues (see the appendix). Nevertheless, they are consistent with the proposition that youth who feel closer to staff will attend with greater regularity *because* their relationships are close. The tentative estimate is that an otherwise average enrollee whose relationship rating is at the 90th percentile (4.43) will have a two-thirds probability of achieving 90 percent or better attendance. In contrast, only one in twenty trainees who have the same measured characteristics but a relationship rating at the 10th percentile will achieve this record of attendance. Even if this estimated difference in attendance is too large by a factor of two, effects of this magnitude are too large to ignore.

SUMMARY

This analysis of staff-youth relationships and absenteeism indicates that characteristics of both sites and trainees affect both relationships and absenteeism. At the same time, the analysis shows important differences concerning which characteristics of trainees and sites matter most. The most consistently important characteristics of trainees for predicting staff-youth relationship ratings are the variables NICE and CONTROL that measure "strategy beliefs" and, perhaps, personality. Conversely, the most consistently important characteristics for predicting attendance are measures of life style: MARIJUANA, HANGOUT, KIDCARE and FELONY CONVICTION. Goals, as measured by wanting and expecting the GED or wanting construction skills, are not statistically significant predictors for either relationships or absenteeism.

Finally, evidence for the importance of differences among the sites in the quality of management is admittedly more speculative. The item from the YOP survey that is statistically significant for predicting absenteeism -- i.e., "Directors care and rules are fair" -- is different from the one that is statistically significant for predicting staff-youth relationship ratings -- i.e., "Directors know what they're doing." As one might normally predict, the estimates show that attendance is better at sites where participants agree more that directors care and rules are fair. However, higher ratings by staff concerning the closeness of their relationships with youth come from sites where the typical youth rates the program *lower* on whether directors know what they're doing. Our discussion above suggests that youth may regard as more competent those directors who operate stricter and less coddling program environments during the early months when youth are most apt to test the boundaries.

Indeed, the next chapter will establish that even though a better relationship rating for an *individual trainee* predicts a *greater* likelihood of positive termination, the likelihood of positive termination tends to be *lower* at sites where the *average* staff-youth relationship rating for the early months is higher.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER 6

Details of Multivariate Estimates for Relationships and Absenteeism

Results for Relationship Ratings

Table 6A.1 shows ordinary least squares multiple regression coefficients for equations where the dependent variable is the average staff youth relationship rating for each trainee. Each column represents one estimated equation.[48] The number in parenthesis below each regression coefficient is a measure of statistical significance called the t-statistic. The t-statistic needs to be at least 1.65 to produce a 90 percent level of confidence that the effect is different from zero; at least 1.96 for a 95 percent confidence level; and at least 2.58 for the 99 percent level. Higher t-statistics justify higher levels of confidence that the effects are real. They also allow more certainty that the *estimated* magnitudes of the effects are close to the *actual* values. The most conventional standard for declaring statistical significance is the 95 percent level of confidence. However, findings that are significant at the 90 percent level may also be regarded as highly suggestive and are often taken seriously if the theory justifies a strong prior expectation that the variable should matter.

The columns of table 6A.1 show six alternative specifications for the regression equation.[49] The reason for showing several specifications is to demonstrate how the results are affected by the inclusion or exclusion of particular explanatory variables. For example, columns 1 through 4 omit the dichotomous (1,0) site-year effects that columns 5

---

[48] The sample for Table 6 includes only youth who entered the program at the beginning of the program cycle and who did not miss filling out both the base-line questionnaire on life styles and attitudes and the questionnaire on demographics, etc. Sample sizes are smaller in columns that include the absenteeism variable because this variable is only defined for youth who were present in both months 2 and 3. The relationships variable uses the data from whichever months are available for months 2-4. Hence, youth for whom the data end after the second month will have a value for the relationship index but not for the absenteeism variable.

[49] The indices for MARIJUANA, NICE, CONTROL, HANGOUT, KIDCARE, WANT&EXPECT GED and WANT CONSTRUCTION TRAINING are all scaled to have a mean of zero and a standard deviation of one. Hence, their coefficients show effects of a one standard deviation change in each index, other things equal. The relationships rating remains in units of the scale from 0 to 5 as defined in the text. Neither here nor for later tables is the relationship rating converted to the mean=0, std=1 format.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

and 6 include. These site-year effects control for otherwise unmeasured differences among the 10 site-years. Other differences among the specifications are discussed in the following few paragraphs.

The estimate shown in Column 7 of table 6A.1 experiments with an application of the "instrumental variables" technique. Here, the measure of absenteeism used to help predict staff-youth relationships is itself a predicted value of the absenteeism variable. It comes from a statistical specification shown below in column 4 of table 6A.2. Column 7 of table 6A.1 omits three explanatory variables (MARIJUANA, HANGOUT and FELONY CONVICTION) that table 6A.2 below shows are important predictors for absenteeism but, as the other columns of table 6A.1 show, do not help in predicting relationships.

While the statistical theory here may seem quite mysterious to lay readers, the core issue is not difficult to grasp. The manner in which we have implemented the instrumental variables procedure is appropriate only if the behaviors measured by MARIJUANA, HANGOUT and FELONY CONVICTION are causes of absenteeism but not of staff-youth relationships. In fact, none of the three variables (i.e., MARIJUANA, HANGOUT or FELONY CONVICTION) is statistically significant (either separately or jointly) when included in the equations for staff-youth relationships. This favors the assumption regarding causation that would justify our procedure. However, ambiguity is unavoidable because theoretical grounds upon which to build a stronger case for this assumption are lacking.

Despite the ambiguity, the finding that absenteeism appears to affect relationships is worth reporting because it is highly suggestive and may in fact be correct. Table 6A.1 shows that with or without the instrumental variables method of estimation, higher absenteeism for a trainee appears to reduce the closeness of his or her relationships with members of the staff.[50]

A second set of independent variables that warrant special attention here are the site-year effects. "Site-year effects" in table 6A.1 are dichotomous (1,0) variables for each of the 10 site-years. The presence of these variables in the estimated equation is indicated in the last row opposite the label "SITE YEAR EFFECTS." The estimated coefficients for site-year effects are not shown.

The only difference between columns 1 and 5 is that column 5 includes site-year effects. Including the site-year effects causes the adjusted R-square to triple from .067 in column 1 to .2059 in column 5. Hence, systematic differences across the sites, measured by coefficients on the site-year effects, account for more than twice as much variation in staff-youth relationship ratings as is accounted for when the site-year effects are omitted from the estimated equation. Including "Directors care and rules are fair," and "Directors Know What They're Doing" in column 2 raises the adjusted R-square (relative to column 1) half as much as including the site-year effects (as in column 5).

---

[50] The coefficient on absenteeism in the instrumental variables specification has a small t-statistic, but is of the same order of magnitude, in fact larger, than the coefficients for absenteeism in the columns that do not use the instrumental variables procedure. Concerning the quality of the instruments, the chi-square statistic for the joint significance of **MARIJUANA**, **HANGOUT** and **FELONY CONVICTION** in the first stage probit regression that predicted the absenteeism variable is 39.03 with a prob. value of 0.0000. The variable for absenteeism that enters the second-stage equation is the continuous estimate of the probability of 10+ percent absenteeism, not a 0,1 variable as in the other columns.

Table 6A.1: MULTIPLE REGRESSION ESTIMATES FOR STAFF-YOUTH RELATIONSHIPS

DEPENDENT VARIABLE:
STAFF RATINGS OF STAFF-YOUTH RELATIONSHIPS FOR MONTHS 2-4
FOR TRAINEES WHO ENTERED AT THE BEGINNING OF A PROGRAM CYCLE
(t-statistics in parenthesis)

Column:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Independent Var's:							
				Absenteeism			
TRAINEE ABSENT MORE THAN 10% of MTHS 2&3*	...	...	-0.173 (2.74)	-0.194 (3.35)	...	-0.236 (4.22)	-0.253 (1.06)
				Trainees' Perceptions of YB Management			
TRAINEES: "DIRECTORS CARE & RULES ARE FAIR" (Youth Opinion Survey)	...	-0.076 (0.23)	...	-0.083 (0.24)	...	...	...
TRAINEES: "DIRECTORS KNOW WHAT THEY'RE DOING" (Youth Opinion Survey)	...	-0.624 (3.51)	...	-0.633 (3.33)	...	...	...
				Strategy Beliefs			
NICE	0.059 (2.85)	0.049 (2.69)	0.062 (2.75)	0.052 (2.57)	0.056 (3.84)	0.064 (4.61)	0.047 (2.72)
CONTROL	0.035 (2.38)	0.030 (2.01)	0.023 (1.53)	0.019 (1.26)	0.044 (3.13)	0.030 (2.63)	0.035 (1.85)
				Life Style			
MARIJUANA	-0.025 (1.08)	-0.008 (0.42)	-0.009 (0.32)	0.009 (0.34)	-0.012 (0.62)	0.003 (0.11)	...
HANGOUT	-0.025 (1.03)	-0.026 (1.23)	-0.010 (0.48)	-0.011 (0.65)	-0.032 (1.53)	-0.019 (1.23)	...
FELONY (0,1)	-0.026 (0.41)	-0.013 (0.20)	0.043 (0.70)	0.050 (0.81)	-0.011 (0.17)	0.044 (0.70)	...
KIDCARE	0.023 (1.04)	0.033 (1.59)	0.047 (1.88)	0.059 (2.68)	0.035 (1.69)	0.067 (3.28)	0.057 (1.82)
				Goals			
WANT & EXPECT GED	0.010 (0.47)	0.017 (0.93)	0.024 (1.18)	0.031 (1.77)	0.013 (0.71)	0.026 (1.51)	0.025 (1.12)
WANT CONSTRUCTION TRAINING	0.009 (0.27)	0.006 (0.21)	0.005 (0.16)	0.002 (0.06)	0.015 (0.46)	0.014 (0.47)	0.014 (0.38)

continued next page.

Table 6A.1, continued.

Column:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Independent Var's:							
				Other Characteristics			
AGE	-0.018 (1.23)	-0.014 (1.19)	-0.016 (1.03)	-0.012 (0.99)	0.0002 (0.01)	0.001 (0.11)	0.003 (0.28)
YEARS OF SCHOOLING	0.006 (0.24)	0.040 (1.55)	0.021 (0.76)	0.054 (2.33)	0.047 (1.93)	0.068 (3.63)	0.045 (1.58)
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE (1,0)	-0.102 (1.60)	-0.096 (2.22)	-0.145 (2.71)	-0.137 (3.07)	-0.038 (0.66)	-0.097 (1.80)	-0.094 (1.66)
MALE (1,0)	-0.193 (3.21)	-0.122 (2.39)	-0.201 (3.09)	-0.126 (2.16)	-0.136 (2.15)	-0.127 (1.84)	-0.144 (2.39)
BLACK (1,0)	-0.022 (0.42)	-0.078 (1.33)	-0.037 (0.64)	-0.095 (1.59)	-0.094 (1.86)	-0.115 (2.41)	-0.088 (1.92)
RESPONDENT SKIPPED SOME QUESTIONS (1,0)	-0.154 (2.00)	-0.162 (2.31)	-0.158 (1.90)	-0.165 (2.12)	-0.144 (1.86)	-0.143 (1.99)	-0.156 (1.92)
CONSTANT	4.496 (11.48)	5.969 (10.17)	4.457 (10.33)	5.992 (9.34)	3.855 (1.00)	3.787 (11.56)	3.893 (9.78)
SITE YEAR EFFECTS?	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y
Adjusted R-Square	.0671	.1408	.1226	.2059	.2004	.3126	.2038
Observations	218	218	202	218	218	202	218

* Column 7 uses an instrumental variables estimate of the absenteeism variable. The first stage regression is the same as column 4 of table A.2. Hence, MARIJUANA, HANGOUT and FELONY are instruments. See text and footnotes for further discussion. White/Huber standard errors are used to adjust t-statistics for grouping in the data by site-years.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Results for Absenteeism

The dependent variable in the multivariate analysis for absenteeism, shown in table 6A.2, is the dichotomous variable that equals one for youth absent more than 10 percent of the days in months 2 and 3. The "probit" estimation technique that these regressions use makes interpretation of the coefficients more complicated than for ordinary least squares.[51] However, the t-statistics in parentheses indicate statistical significance in the same way as for table 6A.1, discussed earlier.

Site-year effects are important predictors of absenteeism just as they were above for staff-youth relationships. The only difference between columns 1 and 4 of table 6A.2 is that column 4 includes site-year effects as additional control variables. The percentage of variation in the dependent variable explained is almost triple in column 4 what it is in column 1. Differences in attendance that the site-year effects are capturing are, in fact, readily apparent on field visits.

The YOP variables "Directors care and rules are fair" and "Directors know what they're doing" help us again, as in the discussion of relationships, to explore possible reasons that the site-year effects make such a difference.[52] The YOP variable "Directors know what they're doing" does not have a statistically significant effect on absenteeism (columns 2 and 3 of table 6A.2).[53] However, the other variable -- "Directors care and rules are fair" -- has statistically significant effects in both of the specifications that include it as a predictor of absenteeism. The sign of the estimated coefficient indicates that attendance is better (absenteeism lower) when more trainees agree that the directors care and the rules are fair.

---

[51] Probit coefficients must be transformed before they have straightforward interpretations. Once transformed, however, they allow us to calculate probabilities, and changes in those probabilities associated with changes in the independent variables.

[52] As explained in an earlier footnote, a single estimated equation can use either the YOP variables or the dichotomous SITE-YEAR effects, but not both.

[53] The statistically insignificant coefficient on DIRECTORS KNOW WHAT THEY'RE DOING indicates more absenteeism when the value of this measure is higher. This appears simply to be a statistical fluke. We see no reason to believe that it might be trying to signal something real. See the correlations in Table 7, for example, where the correlation between DIRECTORS KNOW WHAT THEY'RE DOING and ABSENT >10% MONTHS 2&3 is negative, but again, not statistically significant.

Finally, recall the discussion above concerning absenteeism as a predictor of relationships. As the earlier discussion explained, reasons exist to believe that absenteeism affects relationships and that relationships affect absenteeism. This "simultaneous causation" biases the estimated coefficients and can lead to misleading estimates. The discussion above reviews briefly the conditions under which the "instrumental variables" estimation technique is a satisfactory solution.

Table 6A.2 shows three specifications that use relationships to predict absenteeism. The third, in column 6, uses the instrumental variables method of estimation. NICE and CONTROL are the two variables that we assume to belong as predictors of relationships but not as predictors of absenteeism. Available theory does not give much guidance concerning whether this assumption is justified. While it seems reasonable and is not inconsistent with estimated correlations from table 6.1 and the regression coefficients from table 6A.1, we must acknowledge that the results may be misleading. However, having offered the obligatory cautions, we point out that the results in table 6A.2 are fully consistent with the proposition that youth who feel closer to staff will attend with greater regularity *because* their relationships are close.

The coefficient on the relationships variable in the final column (estimated by instrumental variables) in table 6A.2 predicts a large difference. As reported above in the main body of the chapter, it suggests that an otherwise average enrollee whose relationship rating is at the 90th percentile (4.43) will have a two-thirds probability of achieving 90 percent or better attendance. In contrast, only one in twenty trainees who have the same measured characteristics but a relationship rating at the 10th percentile will achieve this same record of attendance.

TABLE 6A.2 PROBIT MULTIPLE REGRESSION ESTIMATES FOR ABSENTEEISM: ABSENT MORE THAN TEN PERCENT OF THE DAYS DURING MONTHS 2&3 FOR TRAINEES WHO ENTERED AT THE BEGINNING OF A PROGRAM CYCLE (1=YES, 0=NO)

(t-statistics in parentheses)

Column:	1	2	3	4	5	6
Independent Var's:						
			Staff-Youth Relationships			
˚RELATIONSHIPS WITH	...	...	-1.386	...	-1.615	-1.956
STAFF IN MONTHS 2&3			(3.59)		(3.53)	(1.84)
(Ratings by Staff)						
			Trainees' Perceptions of YB Management			
TRAINEES: "DIRECTORS	...	-3.915	-3.860	...	...	...
CARE & RULES ARE FARE"		(2.66)	(2.33)			
(1st Youth Opinion Survey)						
TRAINEES: "DIRECTORS	...	1.095	1.143	...	...	...
KNOW WHAT THEY'RE DOING"		(1.24)	(1.20)			
(1st Youth Opinion Survey)						
			Strategy Beliefs			
NICE	-0.063	-0.106	-0.032	-0.104	-0.004	...
	(1.10)	(1.41)	(0.37)	(1.57)	(0.05)	
CONTROL	-0.057	-0.034	-0.009	-0.094	-0.055	...
	(0.54)	(0.33)	(0.10)	(0.85)	(0.50)	
			Life Style			
MARIJUANA	0.164	0.184	0.190	0.170	0.186	0.146
	(2.53)	(2.64)	(2.19)	(2.36)	(1.97)	(2.20)
HANGOUT	0.121	0.120	0.115	0.187	0.194	0.125
	(2.23)	(2.36)	(2.41)	(2.65)	(2.77)	(1.47)
FELONY	0.543	0.513	0.551	0.465	0.561	0.442
(0,1)	(2.30)	(2.26)	(2.23)	(1.86)	(2.21)	(1.70)
KIDCARE	0.216	0.235	0.298	0.244	0.335	0.314
	(2.49)	(2.44)	(3.43)	(2.20)	(3.29)	(2.48)
			Goals			
WANT & EXPECT GED	0.068	0.107	0.129	0.127	0.151	0.154
	(0.67)	(0.97)	(1.04)	(1.07)	(1.15)	(1.27)
WANT CONSTRUCTION	-0.079	-0.091	-0.079	-0.036	-0.013	-0.006
TRAINING	(0.91)	(1.05)	(0.96)	(0.36)	(0.15)	(0.06)

continued next page.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Table 6A.2, continued.

(t-statistics in parentheses)

Column:	1	2	3	4	5	6
Independent Var's:						
			Other Characteristics			
AGE	0.025	0.053	0.035	0.034	0.013	0.035
	(0.47)	(1.25)	(0.75)	(0.98)	(0.27)	(0.96)
YEARS OF SCHOOLING	-0.009	-0.065	0.042	-0.020	0.102	0.071
	(0.07)	(0.52)	(0.35)	(0.14)	(0.73)	(0.41)
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE	-0.380	-0.366	-0.487	-0.768	-0.964	-0.839
(0,1)	(1.12)	(1.02)	(1.22)	(3.13)	(3.22)	(3.26)
MALE	-0.005	0.023	-0.158	-0.106	-0.326	-0.368
(0,1)	(0.02)	(0.11)	(0.69)	(0.44)	(1.29)	(1.69)
BLACK	0.267	0.277	0.098	0.160	-0.099	-0.024
(0,1)	(3.11)	(2.11)	(0.61)	(0.97)	(0.47)	(0.12)
RESPONDENT SKIPPED	-0.289	-0.207	-0.376	-0.172	-0.423	-0.450
SOME QUESTIONS	(1.21)	(0.75)	(1.27)	(0.57)	(1.36)	(1.26)
CONSTANT	-0.271	7.280	6.672	-0.950	-1.218	6.58
	(0.17)	(2.82)	(2.40)	(0.65)	(0.94)	(2.00)
SITE-YEAR EFFECTS	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y
Psuedo R2	.0894	.1287	.1922	.2223	.2951	.2222
N=217						

[*] Column 6 uses an instrumental variables estimate of the relationships variable, where the first stage regression is the same as column 5 of Table A.1. Hence, NICE and CONTROL are used as instruments. See text and footnotes for further discussion. White/Huber standard errors are used to adjust t-statistics for grouping in the data by site-years.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

CHAPTER 7

PREDICTING POSITIVE TERMINATION AND COMPLETION OF THE GED

During the YouthBuild Demonstration Project, some people believed that most differences among sites in rates of positive termination and GED completion were because of differences in the quality of implementation. Over time, they argued, more sites would adopt best practices. Rates of success in the YouthBuild movement would converge toward (or even exceed) the highest levels achieved during the demonstration. In contrast, directors and staff from sites that achieved lower rates of success preferred to believe that their success rates were lower because their participants were more difficult to serve, not because members of their staff were less skilled or because their implementation practices were less appropriate. Given the information available at the time, it was impossible to gauge the degree to which either perspective was right.

Statistical results in this chapter and the next distinguish among competing explanations for differences among sites in the rates of positive termination and GED completion achieved during the YouthBuild Demonstration Project. In addition, the results show why individual participants who had particular characteristics at the beginning of the program were, based on their characteristics, more or less likely than others to finish the program and to earn the GED. We find that differences among site-years in the trainees account for more of the variation in outcomes than we had initially expected. Still, differences among site-years in positive termination and GED completion rates remain that are not explained by trainees' characteristics. These, we show, are at least partly predictable using measures of teacher quality from participant surveys.

Most of the explanatory variables in this analysis were introduced in chapters 6 and 7. They include base-line values for participants' goals, strategy beliefs, basic skills and life styles as well as age, schooling, gender and race. In addition, they include measures of early social engagement and teacher quality. The chapter is grounded in the framework summarized in chapter 5, that emphasizes the importance of goals, strategies, skills and rewards in determining the intensity and foci of social and developmental engagement. All of the explanatory variables in the analysis are related to this framework and represent factors that we hypothesize to be predictors of positive termination and GED completion. This chapter and the next present the results from testing these hypotheses.

This analysis has implications for the criteria that sites use to recruit, screen and select YouthBuild trainees, as well as for the standards by which sites judge their own performance and others hold them accountable. To explore those implications, the chapter that follows this one constructs simulations. The simulations show what site-specific rates of positive termination and GED completion might have been under each of a number of different assumptions regarding trainees' characteristics and the quality of implementation. The discussion compares simulated outcomes with what sites actually achieved in the YouthBuild demonstration.

THE MEANING OF "POSITIVE TERMINATION"

During the demonstration project, achieving a positive termination meant that the participant did not quit and that he or she achieved standards of behavior and attendance sufficient not to be expelled. Sometimes, with the program's blessing, it meant that the trainee took a job outside of the program before the cycle ended. Generally, even though all sites provided counseling, leadership training, academic remediation and construction training, and even though all graduates surely experienced personal growth, graduation typically did not require that a participant had demonstrated mastery on a well-defined, rigorous and consistently applied set of competencies.[54] Hence, while it seems reasonable to treat positive termination as a laudable and hope-filled outcome, we note that during the YouthBuild demonstration it lacked specificity regarding what one could reliably assume about achievement. (See chapters 9 and 10 for other indications of developmental progress.)

The analysis for positive termination in this chapter covers all types of participants (except those who died or moved away). The analysis for GED completion excludes participants who had a GED or high school degree before the program.[55]

BIVARIATE COMPARISONS

This section shows the one-to-one relationship of each explanatory variable to positive termination and GED completion. These are "bivariate" comparisons. "Multivariate" analyses are superior to bivariate analyses for estimating how much a change in one variable (e.g., recent marijuana use) might cause another (e.g., the likelihood of positive termination) to change. This is because multivariate analyses "hold constant" other influences. Still, bivariate analysis is useful for showing simple patterns in the data. In the present chapter, the bivariate patterns help us to explain some of the multivariate findings that at first may seem counter-intuitive.

Tables 8.1 and 8.2 are bivariate tabulations. For each independent variable, they show the fraction of participants who achieved positive terminations or GEDs when the independent variable was in each of several ranges: below the tenth percentile; below the

---

[54] The analysis excludes youth who had "neutral terminations" due, for example, to family relocation or the death of the trainee.

[55] Tallahassee awarded high school degrees instead of GEDs. We treat the two credentials the same.

Table 7.1

FREQUENCY OF POSITIVE TERMINATION
In Given Ranges of Independent Variables

Range of Indep. Var: (Percentiles)	<10TH	<25TH	>75TH	>90TH	DIFFERENCE
Column:	1	2	3	4	Col. 4-1
Independent Variables:					
Age	.262	.456	.849	.891	.629
TROUBLE	.770	.790	.552	.472	-.298
STREETS	.800	.838	.548	.471	-.329
HANGOUT	.829	.804	.553	.521	-.308
MARIJUANA	.721	.721	.614	.436	-.285
KIDCARE	.548	.602	.750	.833	.285
NICE	.439	.554	.682	.750	.311
EFFORT	.552	.597	.690	.690	.138
KNOWLEDGE	.612	.635	.744	.702	.090
LUCK	.548	.639	.679	.676	.128
CONTROL	.600	.588	.716	.594	-.006
Want & Expect GED (Dropouts only)	.486	.618	.637	.637	.151
Want Constuction	.467	.576	.713	.713	.246
Felony Conviction	.718	.718	.579	.579	-.139
Prior Schooling (Years)	.547	.543	.805	.901[56]	.354
Relationships (months 2&3)	.352	.571	.774	.758	.406
Attendance (months 2&3)	.600	.568	.851	.882	.282

---

[56] This number represents 12 years of schooling and high school graduate.

Table 7.2

FREQUENCY OF GED COMPLETION DURING YOUTHBUILD AMONG ALL ENROLLEES WHO WERE HS DROPOUTS
In Given Ranges of Independent Variables

Range of Indep Var: (Percentiles)	<10TH	<25TH	>75TH	>90TH	DIFFERENCE
Column:	1	2	3	4	Col. 4-1
Independent Variables:					
Age	.128	.213	.386	.529	.401
TROUBLE	.352	.368	.200	.185	-.167
STREETS	.381	.392	.164	.214	-.167
HANGOUT	.363	.368	.221	.184	-.179
MARIJUANA	.258	.258	.245	.233	-.025
KIDCARE	.242	.235	.279	.174	-.068
NICE	.156	.238	.244	.290	.134
EFFORT	.074	.185	.275	.275	.201
KNOWLEDGE	.196	.162	.340	.353	.157
LUCK	.400	.300	.200	.207	-.193
CONTROL	.100	.167	.347	.421	.321
Want & Expect GED	.086	.197	.323	.323	.237
Want Constuction	.150	.200	.356	.356	.206
Felony Conviction	.287	.287	.224	.224	-.063
Prior Schooling (Years)	.220	.205	.321	n.a.[57]	.101
Relationships (months 2&3)	.167	.234	.258	.185	.018
Attendance (months 2&3)	.300	.196	.333	.368	.068

---

[57] This number represents 12 years of schooling and high school graduate.

twenty-fifth percentile; over the seventy-fifth or over the ninetieth percentile. The final column of each table shows the difference between rates for the two most extreme categories -- below the tenth percentile versus above the ninetieth.

Table 7.1 shows that positive terminations are most strongly associated with life style and with absenteeism and relationships from the early months of the program. In addition, strategy beliefs concerning the importance of friendliness, honesty and respectfulness (as measured by NICE) are clearly associated with positive termination. Recall from the last chapter that NICE is a statistically significant predictor of staff-youth relationship ratings.

In contrast to the pattern for positive termination, completion of the GED is not strongly associated with life-style or with early social engagement. Instead, the variables that best distinguish those who complete the GED from those who do not are CONTROL (i.e., belief in the importance of effort and knowledge as opposed to chance), goals (regarding GED completion and construction training) and basic skills (i.e., self-assessed adequacy of one's own reading and math skills for finding legal employment). Finally, tables 8.1 and 8.2 show that age is strongly and positively related to both GED completion and positive termination. The positive relationship to GED completion, however, operates through the association with positive termination: we see below that among participants who achieve positive terminations, there is no age difference between those who do and do not earn the GED.

In further preparation for understanding subtle differences in causation for positive termination versus GED completion, let us compare patterns in the data for three categories of high school dropouts. Take the letters N, P and G to represent three distinct groups. First, "N" for "Neither" represents youth who achieve neither positive termination nor completion of the GED.[58] Second, "P" for "Positive Termination" represents the group that achieves positive terminations but *does not complete the GED*. Third, "G" for "GED" represents those who achieve both a positive termination and the GED.[59]

The diagram below summarizes the distinctions between N, P and G and associated hypotheses regarding engagement and achievement.

DEFINITIONS AND HYPOTHESES REGARDING ENGAGEMENT

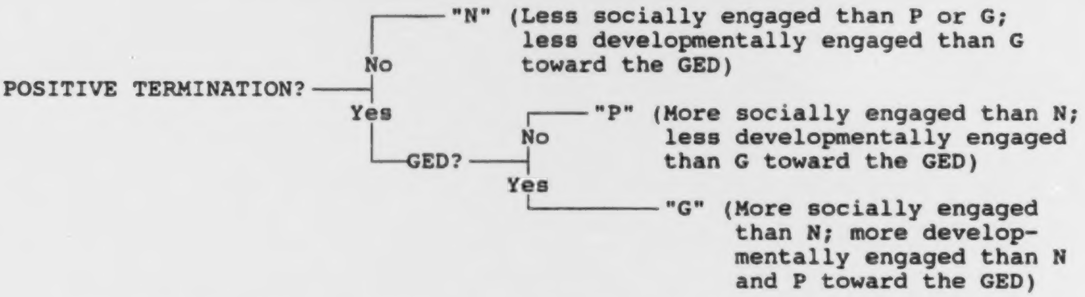

POSITIVE TERMINATION?
No
"N" (Less socially engaged than P or G; less developmentally engaged than G toward the GED)
Yes
GED?
No
"P" (More socially engaged than N; less developmentally engaged than G toward the GED)
Yes
"G" (More socially engaged than N; more developmentally engaged than N and P toward the GED)

Table 7.3 tabulates differences among the three groups. For each variable, Column 1 shows the average value for group P minus the average for group N. Column 2 is the average for group G minus that for group N, and Column 3 shows the average for group G minus that for group P. Values in Table 7.3 are in units of standard deviations among high school dropouts. Means for selected variables appear at the bottom of the table.

Table 7.3 shows that early attendance patterns for P and G are better than those for N, but that P and G have attendance levels that are essentially the same: the daily rate

---

[58] This does not include youth who had to leave for benign reasons, such as a move by the family or death. These youth are excluded from the statistical analysis.

[59] Achieving the GED without a positive termination was rare. It happened once at each of three different sites, and three times at a fourth site for a total of six times. Analyses that tabulate outcomes by the three groups, N, P and G, include these six youth in the G category. However, three of the six do not show up in most of the analysis because they are missing values in the data for positive termination. Usually, a missing value for positive termination means that the youth moved away, had to leave for justifiable personal reasons or died.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Table 7.3
DIFFERENCES AMONG HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUTS WHO BEGAN AT THE BEGINNING OF THE REGULAR CYCLE
Units are Standard Deviations Among High School Dropouts Only

Categories: N = Neither positive termination nor GED.
P = Positive termination but did not earn GED.
G = GED and positive termination.

	P minus N	G minus N	G minus P
Column	1	2	3
Independent Variables (in s.d. units):			
ABSENT>10% MONTHS 2&3	-0.514	-0.591	0.077
DAYS % ABSENT MONTHS 2&3	-0.525	-0.572	0.047
EARLY RELATIONSHIPS (individuals)	0.769	0.639	-0.130
AGE (years)	0.545	0.660	0.115
MARIJUANA	-0.306	-0.328	-0.022
NICE	0.300	0.384	0.084
CONTROL	-0.218	0.458	0.676
HANGOUT	-0.217	-0.459	-0.242
KIDCARE	0.416	0.307	-0.109
WANT&EXPECT GED	0.166	0.505	0.339
WANT CONSTRUCTION	0.280	0.622	0.342
FELONY CONVICTION	-0.239	-0.406	-0.167
YEARS OF SCHOOLING	0.299	0.104	-0.195
EXPECTED INCOME POTENTIAL IS HIGHER IN LEGAL EMPLOYMENT	0.055	0.222	0.167
EXPECT DIFFICULTY FINDING $5/HR JOB	0.032	-0.356	-0.388
BASIC SKILLS (self-assessed adequacy)	-0.130	0.343	0.473
EARLY RELATIONSHIPS (site's average)	0.033	-0.235	-0.268
GED TEACHER QUALITY RATING	0.304	0.618	0.314
GED&CONSTRUCTION TEACHER QUALITY	0.398	0.545	0.147

Means and Standard Deviations for Selected Variables from Above:

	MEANS				
Category:	N	P	G	TOTAL	STD.DEV.
ABSENT>10% MONTHS 2&3	0.800	0.550	0.513	0.624	0.486
DAYS % ABSENT MONTHS 2&3	23.354	15.425	14.714	17.900	15.117
AGE	19.123	20.419	20.692	19.976	2.377
FELONY CONVICTION	0.329	0.226	0.154	0.249	0.432
YEARS OF SCHOOLING	10.080	10.339	10.170	10.198	0.865

N=166

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

of absenteeism in months 2 and 3 for N is about 23 percent, while that for P and G is about 15 percent.

Groups P and G are similar in other ways as well. Compared to N, both:

- score much better than N on staff-youth relationships early in the program (EARLY RELATIONSHIPS, individuals);
- are older on average by more than one year (AGE);
- use marijuana less often (MARIJUANA);
- believe more in the strategic efficacy of honesty, friendliness and respectfulness (NICE); and
- have more contact with and concern for children (KIDCARE).

On other measures, G does better than P and both do better than N:

- G includes fewer youth with felony convictions (15.4%) than P (22.6%), and P includes fewer than N (32.9%). (FELONY)
- In the last few months before the program, G spent less time simply hanging out than P spent, and P spent less time than N. (HANGOUT)
- For both GEDs and construction training, G expressed more interest at the base-line than P expressed, but P expressed more interest than N (though the difference between P and N is a meager 0.166 standard deviation for the GED, so that P is more similar to N than to G).

The most interesting and subtle finding in table 7.3 concerns CONTROL. For CONTROL, G is superior to both P and N, *but N is superior to P*. This reversal of rank order between P and N appears also for BASIC SKILLS, but it holds most strongly for CONTROL.

Recall that CONTROL combines strategy beliefs concerning effort, knowledge and chance. Tables 10 and 11 suggest that CONTROL is strongly associated with GED completion but not with positive termination. In fact, the multivariate analysis below will show that, other things equal, a higher value of CONTROL predicts a lower probability of positive termination but a higher probability of completing the GED. How can this be?

The pattern in table 7.3 is instructive. High school dropouts in YouthBuild who have an above-average value for CONTROL appear more inclined to make one of two decisions: they decide either to earn the GED in YouthBuild or to leave the program.[60] Conversely, youth with lower values of CONTROL tend more frequently than others to remain with the program and (as chapter 10 shows) to be more reliant upon the staff for help with their development.

Finally, note that table 7.3 includes three variables not introduced in earlier sections. Each has only 10 distinct values, one for each site-year. The three comprise a category that we label the "learning environment at the site." The first is the average value for the site-year of the index of staff-youth relationships (we postpone comment on its pattern in table 7.3 until the next section). The other two are measures of teacher quality. Both are constructed from items on the opinion survey that trainees completed at the fourth and eighth months of the program. Each is an average value for the site-year, combining responses from all youth who responded to the survey.

GED TEACHER QUALITY RATING combines answers to three items for which the choices are "Yes," "Sometimes" or "No." The three items are: "Teachers care how we're doing," "Teachers help us individually when we need it," and "Teachers know their subjects." An additional three items for construction training are similar in content: "Supervisors teach us well," "People care about the quality of our work," and "Safety rules are followed." GED & CONSTRUCTION TEACHER QUALITY combines the six items for the GED and construction training together.[61] In the bivariate tabulations of table 7.3, participants at sites that give teachers higher ratings are more likely to complete the GED and, even if they do not complete the GED, they are more likely to complete the

---

60 Other recent research shows similar findings concerning the propensity of youth with higher ratings on locus of control to drop out from high school. See James P. Connell, et. al., "...

61h indices are standardized sums of answers for the respective items. The Cronbach's alpha is 0.78 for GED TEACHER QUALITY RATING and 0.73 for GED & CONSTRUCTION TEACHER QUALITY.

program.

The past few pages have summarized bivariate relationships between explanatory variables and the two outcome variables upon which this chapter focuses. One purpose of showing these relationships has been to pave the way for the discussion of multivariate findings. Compared to the bivariate patterns above, the multivariate analysis below gives a more accurate assessment of causation. It estimates the impact of each explanatory variable on the likelihood of positive termination and GED completion, holding other explanatory variables in the analysis constant. Generally, but not always, variables such as absenteeism, on which groups G and P are similar to one another but different from N, tend even in the multivariate analysis to be more statistically important as predictors of positive termination than as predictors of GED completion. Conversely, variables on which P and N are more similar to one another than to G, such as WANT & EXPECT GED, tend to be more important as predictors of GED completion.

MULTIVARIATE FINDINGS

This discussion is written to be accessible to readers without formal training in statistics. Hence, tables of estimated coefficients and a more detailed discussion of methodology and data appear in the appendix to the chapter. Also in the appendix, is a set of out-of-sample simulations for positive termination rates.

A word about these simulations seems in order. For each of the ten site-years, the out-of-sample simulation uses parameters estimated with data from the other nine. These simulations show what the positive termination rate might have been for each site-year if it had served the trainees that it actually served, but operated like the typical site-year among the other nine. The graph shows that the out-of-sample predictions are remarkably similar to sites' actual rates of positive termination.

Hence, even though we conclude that the quality of implementation varied among the demonstration site-years, the out-of-sample predictions provide evidence that differences among the site-years in positive termination rates are more reflective of whom the sites served, than of differences in the quality of their implementation. The next chapter shows that differences in the quality of implementation appear to be relatively more important for predicting differences in rates of GED completion.

The discussion here in the body of the paper covers three sets of estimates: one set that includes all types of participants in the sample and concerns determinants of positive termination; one that concerns determinants of GED completion among high school dropouts; and one that concerns determinants of GED completion among the high school dropouts who achieved positive termination.[62] Each section of the discussion below addresses all three sets of estimates. Headings correspond to logical groupings of the explanatory variables: learning environment at the site; social engagement early in the program; strategy beliefs; life style and reward structures; goals for GED and construction; basic reading and math skills; and other characteristics of participants.

Learning Environment at the Site

As measured here, the learning environment at the site includes the warmth of staff-youth relationships and the quality of teachers as instructors.[63] The patterns that were evident in table 7.3 are sustained in the multivariate analysis. Other things equal, a trainee at a site where the average rating for the GED instructors is high, is more likely to

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

---

[62] Since the estimated probability of positive termination is virtually identical among those who complete the GED and those who do not (among youth who actually complete the program), we expect that sample selection bias should not seriously distort the estimates of GED completion conditional on positive termination.

[63] Each of these variables takes on one value for each site year. Statistical equations that include them do not include indicator variables (site-year effects) representing the individual site-years. The adjusted R-square statistics suggest that the two measures of teacher quality account for roughly half of the explanatory power that the site-year effects capture.

complete the GED than if he were at a site where the average rating was low.[64] Similarly, the same trainee is more likely to achieve a positive termination at a site where the composite rating for GED and construction teachers together is higher. Presumably, these results reflect the fact that better teachers are more successful at engaging students.

The opinion survey from which the ratings of teachers come includes a number of additional ways that participants express their judgments about teachers and other members of the staff. No single index from this data is unambiguously the right one to use for the present statistical analysis. While the present chapter uses ratings of the GED and construction teachers to measure the learning environment, the same two indices were not statistically significant in predicting attendance and relationships in the early months of the program.[65]

Instead, in predicting relationships and absenteeism, the previous chapter uses answers to questions about the caring, fairness and competence of the site's leadership: "Directors care and the rules are fair," and "Directors know what they're doing." That chapter finds that the site-year's average value for "Directors care and rules are fair" helps in predicting absenteeism but not relationships, while value for "Directors know what they're doing" helps in predicting staff-youth relationships, but not in the way that we initially expected.

A related surprise occurs here. Contrary to what we expected, estimates show that sites with higher mean values for the staff-youth relationships index in the early months of the program produced *fewer* positive terminations and *fewer* GEDs.[66] The same negative relationship appears as well in table 7.3, above. Moreover, it comports well with the finding from the analysis of staff-youth relationship ratings in the last chapter. In predicting staff ratings of their relationships with individual youth, that analysis found that average ratings were somewhat *lower* at sites where the trainees rated the directors to be *more* competent, as measured by the degree of agreement with the proposition: "Directors know what they're doing."

---

[64] Recall that students do not identify themselves individually on the opinion surveys, so even if we wanted to use the individual-level responses to the survey we could not match students' responses with the rest of their individual-level data.

[65] Hence, these two indices are not among the results reported on tables of statistical findings in the analysis of relationships and absenteeism.

As addressed in the previous chapter, this apparently negative effect of having a high rating on staff-youth relationships early in the program may have a logical explanation. We are aware of examples from our site visits in which staff-youth relationships in the early months did not appear to be as chummy at sites that imposed more order and discipline. Moreover, the sites that imposed more order and discipline (without disrespecting youth) appeared to be more effective. This does not conflict with the conventional wisdom that caring is a prerequisite for effective staff work. Youth have a subtle understanding of caring. When asked, they define caring to be a concern for their fundamental welfare and for their development, not simply nor even primarily for their momentary happiness.

Social Engagement Early in the Program

The site-year's average rating on staff-youth relationships, discussed directly above, is only one of two measures of relationships in the analysis. The other is the rating for the individual trainee. As explained in the previous chapter, attendance and

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

---

[66] The variable "EARLY RELATIONSHIPS (Site-Year's Mean)" is statistically significant in the 2nd column of Table 14, but not in the 4th column. The 2nd column includes only trainees actually present in the first few months, the 4th column includes additional trainees who replaced those who left early. In two important cases where programs replaced a number of trainees that they lost early, the site had changed enough by the time that the replacements entered that the mean relationships rating from the early months of the cycle probably did not adequately represent their experience. Another reason for the lack of statistical significance in column 4 may be that the site which represents the largest share of the difference in the sample between the 2nd and 4th columns may not fit the pattern as well as the others do.

relationship ratings for individual trainees are proxies for individuals' distinctive levels of social engagement. We measure the individual's rating as a deviation from the site-year's mean. The hypothesis here is that trainees who establish better relationships with staff than their peers do, and who have better attendance records during the first few months of the program, will be more likely to achieve positive terminations and to complete the GED. For the GED, better attendance should indicate more time on task for GED preparation, and better relationship ratings should indicate closer ties to teachers and others who provide support and encouragement.

The findings are only partially consistent with these hypotheses. As hypothesized, when a participant is absent less and has better relationships with the staff, he or she is more likely to earn a positive termination. However, he or she is not more likely to complete the GED. This combination of findings seems to indicate the following: while they seem to measure *social* engagement, attendance and staff-youth relationship ratings are not good predictors of the *developmental* engagement and skills necessary for success on the GED exam. See chapters 5, 9 and 10 for more on social and developmental engagement.

Strategy Beliefs

NICE combines beliefs about the strategic importance of honesty, friendliness and respectfulness. Results reported in the previous chapter indicate that NICE is an important predictor of social engagement as measured by staff members' reports of staff-youth relationships.[67] Directly above, we report that the warmth of a trainee's relationship with members of the staff for the first few months of the program is a statistically significant predictor of positive termination, but not GED completion. Here, the same is true for NICE. This is not surprising, since it seems logical that NICE should affect program outcomes primarily through its impact on relationships. Indeed, the results show that the estimated effect of NICE on the likelihood of positive termination is smaller and less statistically significant when the analysis controls for staff-youth relationship ratings.[68]

---

[67] NICE is not, however, an important predictor of attendance, which is the other variable that we use to measure early social engagement with the program.

CONTROL combines beliefs about the importance of effort and knowledge as opposed to chance. The multivariate findings show that, other things equal, higher values for CONTROL decrease the likelihood of positive termination but increase that of GED completion.[69] This is consistent with the pattern that we saw above in the context of table 7.3. Specifically, among high school dropouts, the highest average value for CONTROL is for those who stay in the program and complete the GED. However, among those who fail to earn the GED, table 7.3 shows that those who achieve positive termination have the lowest value for CONTROL among all the high school dropouts in YouthBuild. Similarly, but not shown in table 7.3, the pattern is comparable for high school graduates: high school graduates who earned positive terminations had lower values for CONTROL than those who did not.

Despite the fact that this pattern was unanticipated, it makes sense. Even though the multivariate analysis controls for how much the participant wants and expects the GED, the degree to which the participant believes that effort and knowledge are more important than chance should affect his or her certainty regarding whether the GED is indeed attainable. It should also affect the participants propensity to make decisions, including that to leave the program if he or she regards it as not a good fit.[70]

---

[68] To see this, see table 14 in the appendix to this chapter and compare column 1 with column 5, and column 3 with column 7. NICE is statistically significant in columns 5 and 7.

[69] The effect on positive termination is more statistically significant in table 14 than in table 13. This is because trainees with the lowest values for control left in the first two months, and table 14 pertains to those who lasted at least into the third month of the program.

Life Style and Reward Structures

Deciding to attend YouthBuild and to stick with it requires sacrificing the rewards and pleasures of being in other places doing other things. For some, it requires breaking old habits and routines. The general hypothesis here is that the greater the rewards associated with being in other places and the greater the unconventionality by mainstream standards of old routines, the lower the likelihood that a trainee will achieve a positive termination and the smaller the probability that he or she will focus his or her efforts on earning the GED.

This category of explanatory variables includes the answers to questions about time allocation from the base-line questionnaire. The answers apply to behaviors in the "past few months" before a trainee entered the program. In addition, two variables measure expectations concerning the availability of work and the payoffs. For five of the six variables this category called "life styles and reward structures," the sign of the effect is theoretically ambiguous -- it is easy to imagine reasons that estimated coefficients might be either negative or positive. The exception is MARIJUANA, where one expects to find that youth who smoke marijuana more often will do worse in the program. MARIJUANA is not simply a measure of drug use: it should be understood as a proxy for participation in life styles and associated reward structures of which MARIJUANA use is an integral part.[71]

---

[70] We say more about CONTROL in chapter _. That chapter reports findings from the end-of-program survey. Asked to rate the importance of the staff on several dimensions, YouthBuild graduates who had lower values of CONTROL at the beginning of the program rate the staff more important than others do as teachers, as sources of information and for help with personal problems. Unfortunately, since we did not collect the data to compute CONTROL from the end-of-program survey, we cannot say how much trainees changed on this dimension.

[71] Our data include several measures of unconventionality. We find that the frequency of marijuana use is correlated with each of them. Including multiple such measures in the estimated equations produces problems of multicolinearity. We tried a few indices that included multiple such measures, but found that using marijuana use alone produced the best fit for the estimated equations. Still, it is probably most appropriate to interpret the measured effect of marijuana use as a general measure of unconventionality, instead of simply marijuana use, per se.

We find that the frequency of marijuana use is a strong statistically significant predictor of POSITIVE TERMINATION but it does not appear to affect GED COMPLETION. While the latter finding does not fit the prior hypothesis, it is understandable given the pattern that table 7.3 shows for MARIJUANA: variables on which groups G and P do not differ will seldom be found to be statistically significant predictors of GED COMPLETION.

For the other variables in this category, the sign could, in theory, be either positive or negative in the equation for POSITIVE TERMINATION. For example:

VARIABLE	WHY A POSITIVE SIGN?	WHY A NEGATIVE SIGN?
HANGOUT	Youth tired of having little else to do may be ready for a better alternative.	Youth accustomed to hanging out may find it difficult to break free from the routine.
KIDCARE	Concern for children and the desire to be a positive model and parent are reasons to make the best of the YB opportunity.	Some youth with high values of KIDCARE have child-care responsibilities that interfere with YB participation.
FELONY	Alternative opportunities are scarce for youth with felony convictions on record. Felons in YB have fewer legal alternatives than others do and therefore reason to value YB.	Felons may be more often still in the criminal life style.[72] Also, correlations suggest a lack of social supports outside of the program.
EXPECTED INCOME HIGHER IN LEGAL EMPLOYMENT	1. Conventionality and orientation toward legal work may fit well with YB values. 2. Low expected income in illegal alternatives may make preparation for work through YB an attractive option.	The better a youth expects legal options to be outside of YB, the more likely he may be to leave the program in search of a regular job before the program ends.
EXPECT DIFFICULTY FINDING $5/HOUR JOB	More expected difficulty is associated with greater need to take the assistance that the program can provide.	Sense of hopelessness regarding the availability of work may discourage persistence in the program.

We find that two of the variables in the chart above, KIDCARE and EXPECTED

---

[72] For example, youth in the sample with felony records report on the base-line survey that they followed friends into trouble in the last few months before the program more often than other youth in the sample who do not have felony convictions.

INCOME POTENTIAL IS HIGHER IN LEGAL EMPLOYMENT, are substantially more positive and statistically significant predictors of positive termination after the first few months have passed. It appears that those who leave the program in the first few months may come disproportionately from among those with child care problems and from among youth who perceive good legal alternatives outside of YouthBuild. Once the early leavers are gone, however, earning a positive termination is clearly more likely (other things equal) for youth who have higher values of KIDCARE and higher values of EXPECTED INCOME POTENTIAL IS HIGHER IN LEGAL EMPLOYMENT. For KIDCARE in particular, this finding resonates strongly with qualitative evidence from our interviews. Frequently, participants gave commitment to offspring and the desire to set good examples for children as major explanations for their perseverance. Neither KIDCARE nor EXPECTED INCOME POTENTIAL IS HIGHER IN LEGAL EMPLOYMENT is a statistically significant predictor of GED completion.

Multivariate results show that having a felony conviction in one's past is negative for both positive termination and GED completion (though for GED COMPLETION the effect is not always statistically significant). Correlations with other variables from the base-line survey show that youth with prior felony convictions are more involved in criminal activities in the months immediately before the program and have fewer of the external social supports that might help to sustain their participation in YouthBuild. For example, felony conviction is positively correlated with continued reliance on illegal activities to earn money in the "past few months" before the program and negatively correlated with baby sitting. Similarly, it is associated with negative answers to the question, "Are most of your friends the type that you want?" Because they come to the program more socially disconnected from constructive social supports, participants who have felony records may need more social support from the program in order to succeed at the same rate as others.

The bivariate numbers in tables 10 through 12 show that youth who "hang out" more have lower positive termination rates and lower rates of GED completion. In contrast with other patterns, this finding from the bivariate tabulations does not carry over to the multivariate estimates: HANGOUT is not a statistically significant predictor for positive terminations or GED completion. Apparently, hanging out, *per se,* is not a negative indicator. Instead, the negative behaviors (e.g., frequent marijuana use) that correlate with hanging out may account for the bivariate findings.

The final variable to address from this category is EXPECT DIFFICULTY FINDING WORK AT $5/HOUR. Results for this variable in the equations that predict positive termination are mixed, suggesting that the net effect is weak, at best. Conversely, for GED completion, the estimated effect is always negative and virtually always statistically significant -- youth who expect difficulty tend not to complete the GED. We speculate that EXPECT DIFFICULTY FINDING WORK AT $5/HOUR is capturing some combination of basic-skills deficits and lack of self confidence. Either could plausibly impede success on the GED but not interfere with positive termination.

Goals for GED and Construction

The analysis includes base-line measures for two major goals: to earn a GED and to learn construction skills. Youth to whom earning the GED and learning construction are more important are better matches for YouthBuild. They should be more likely to earn GEDs and positive terminations, other things equal. Of course, these statistical hypotheses will fail if youth decide that the program is not a good vehicle for their purposes, or if our measures are not good gauges of the intensity with which youth embrace these goals.

The findings here show tha[illegible]ile both goals have positive estimated effects as predictors of positive termination, neither reaches conventional levels of statistical significance when the analysis begins from the first day of the program. However, after the first two months, when the youth who want the GED but not the rest of YouthBuild are likely to have left, wanting and expecting the GED becomes a consistently positive predictor of POSITIVE TERMINATION among those who remain. Conversely, wanting construction training is never a statistically significant predictor of positive termination.[73]

While the effect of goals on positive termination is mixed, their effect for GED completion is strong and clear. Both types of goals -- WANT & EXPECT GED and WANT CONSTRUCTION -- help to predict GED completion. However, as one might expect, the impact of how much the participant wants and expects the GED is larger and more statistically significant. A most likely reason that wanting construction training matters for predicting GED completion is that the high school degree or GED is an important requirement for access to further training, especially by construction unions.

The mixed effect for positive termination and the strong effect for GED completion is consistent with our emphasis on the distinction between social and developmental engagement. Social engagement is a foundation for developmental engagement, but not sufficient for production of developmental outcomes beyond those narrowly associated with relationships. Positive termination, while important, requires mainly that the trainee was a good enough social fit with the program that s/he and the program decided to maintain the match. Achieving the GED requires deeper levels of effort and focus -- developmental engagement toward the GED. Reaching this state of engagement can be more likely, depending on the degree to which the trainee wants and expects the outcome, the GED, and puts forth the effort and focus will produce.

---

[73] Here, it is plausible (though not established) that the hypothesized greater propensity toward positive termination among trainees who want construction the most is offset by a greater propensity for such trainees to find work (or alternative training) outside of YouthBuild or to be dissatisfied by the mostly rudimentary nature of the training, producing a net effect close to zero.

Basic Reading and Math Skills

No matter how much a participant wants and expects the GED, reading and math skills are no doubt important among factors that make it possible. Unfortunately, this study does not have a direct measure of reading and math skills. It does, however, have a self assessment. Trainees on the base-line survey answered a series of questions about explanations for difficulty finding jobs. "Difficulty with Reading or Math," was one of the items. That item is the basis for the variable that we call "BASIC SKILLS (Self assessment of adequacy for employment)."

We find that participants with higher values for this measure of basic skills are more likely to achieve positive terminations, but the effect is only marginally statistically significant in the multivariate analysis. In contrast to its weak impact on the likelihood of positive termination, this measure is the most statistically significant variable of all in predicting completion of the GED. To a highly statistically significant degree, youth who report that their reading and math skills are barriers to employment are less likely to earn the GED while in YouthBuild. This is not at all surprising, but it reminds us that reading and math skills are among the more important differences to take into account when selecting trainees, allocating resources for instructional support or setting target levels of GED completion for sites.

Other Characteristics

The analysis includes several additional indices as control variables: age, years of schooling, gender and race. In addition, equations that estimate the probability of positive termination control for whether the participant began the program as a high school graduate or not. Statistical tests show that, combined, "years of schooling" and "high school graduate" are always statistically significant in predicting positive terminations:

youth with more prior education are more likely to complete the program successfully.[74]

The story is different for the GED. Among the program's high school dropouts who earn positive terminations, those who earn the GED have essentially the same amount of schooling as those who do not (10.339 versus 10.170 years). Hence, it is not surprising that even in the multivariate analysis, the variable "years of schooling" is never a statistically significant predictor of GED completion. Similarly, gender and race are never statistically significant predictors in any of the specifications for either of the dependent variables.[75]

Age is a statistically significant predictor for positive termination but not for completion of the GED. Generally, age is positively correlated with variables that one would expect to be associated with maturity, and the presence of such variables in the multivariate analysis dampens the estimated impact of age, *per se*. Indeed, if we had a sufficiently complete set of measures for participants' attitudes and behaviors, age, *per se*, probably would never be a statistically significant predictor. Across the project as a whole, it is very clear that youth who are more mature at the base line have better outcomes in the program. This relates to theme of "readiness" that we revisit in the next chapter and emphasize more in chapter 9.

Now, having reviewed basic patterns of statistical significance regarding predictors of positive termination and GED completion, we move along to consider a different question from *statistical* significance.

---

[74] Hence, since the joint significance is always high, readers examining tables in the appendix to this chapter should be cautious in drawing conclusions from the separate t-statistics on YEARS OF SCHOOLING and HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE.

[75] While they are present as controls in all of the estimated equations, the coefficients for MALE and BLACK are not always shown in the tables in the appendix.

WHICH VARIABLES WERE MORE IMPORTANT?

Using estimated coefficients from the multivariate analysis and a set of descriptive characteristics for any given trainee, we can estimate the likelihood for that trainee of positive termination and GED completion. In addition, for any two trainees, real or hypothetical, we can calculate the percentage of the estimated difference in the likelihood of positive termination or GED completion that is due to each explanatory variable in the analysis.

Imagine a trainee who is a prototype. His characteristics equal the average (the mean) among trainees who achieved positive terminations. Imagine another prototype whose characteristics equal the average among those who did not. Similar prototypes might represent high school dropouts in the program, one for youth who completed the GED and another for those who did not. Using such prototypes, we can ask the following question: "On what basis might one have predicted in advance that the trainees who ultimately earned positive terminations or GEDs in YouthBuild were more likely to do so than their peers who did not?"

Table 7.4 compares sets of successful and unsuccessful trainees such as the prototypes defined in the paragraph above. Each number in table 7.4 shows what percentage of the difference in the likelihood of success on positive termination or GED completion is due to each set of explanatory variables in the analysis.[76] Each column adds to 100 percent of the predicted difference in GED completion or positive termination

---

[76] each variable in each column, we take its value minus that for unsuccessful trainees, then multiply that difference times the estimated coefficient from a set of multivariate results. (See the notes at the bottom of the table for more details.) Then we compute the sum of such differences to get a total for the column. Each number in table 16 is the percentage of the column's total accounted for by a particular explanatory variable (or set of variables).

TABLE 7.4

PERCENTAGES OF THE PREDICTED DIFFERENCES IN POSITIVE TERMINATION RATES AND GED COMPLETION RATES ACCOUNTED FOR BY SETS OF EXPLANATORY VARIABLES COMPARING YOUTH WHO HAD POSITIVE TERMINATIONS OR EARNED GEDs WITH THOSE WHO DID NOT

(Capitalized Headings in Each Column Sum to 100 Percent of the Predicted Difference)

The dependent variable being predicted is:	GED COMPLETION		POSITIVE TERMINATIONS	
Comparison is within a sample comprising:	All Dropouts	If PT=1	ALL	3rd Month & After
Column:	1	2	3	4
PANEL A: PERCENTAGE (of the predicted difference) DUE TO EACH CATEGORY				
1. BASIC SKILLS (Self-Assessment of Adequacy)	11.2	16.2	1.2	0.0
2. STRATEGY BELIEFS	15.6	27.0	4.7	3.5
Nice	2.3	-0.1	7.3	3.8
Control	13.3	27.1	-2.6	-0.4
3. GOALS	22.3	24.9	6.8	5.5
Want & Expect GED	16.4	15.0	2.1	3.6
Want Construction	5.9	9.9	4.7	1.9
SUM of lines 1, 2 and 3:	49.1	68.1	12.7	9.0
4. AGE	2.6	0.9	21.4	12.5
5. YEARS OF SCHOOLING	0.3	2.2	13.5	13.3
6. HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE	...	...	7.6	-0.3
SUM of lines 4, 5 and 6:	2.9	3.1	42.5	25.8
7. LIFE STYLE & REWARD STRUCTURES	21.7	12.0	21.9	20.3
Expect Income Higher in Legal Empl.	1.4	1.6	1.7	1.5
Expect Difficulty Finding $5/Hr. Job	5.0	4.2	-0.5	1.9
Marijuana	0.6	0.1	7.5	2.9
Felony Conviction	10.9	3.6	7.7	6.0
Hangout	3.8	2.0	2.5	-2.5
Kidcare	0.0	0.6	3.0	10.4
8. SITE-YEAR EFFECTS	22.8	15.4	20.8	15.9
9. MALE	1.2	-0.4	0.2	0.0
10. BLACK	0.4	1.7	2.0	0.5
SUM of lines 7, 8, 9 and 10:	46.1	28.7	44.9	36.7
11. EARLY ENGAGEMENT WITH THE PROGRAM	...	...	...	21.7
Early Relationships (Individuals)	...	...	...	10.0
Absent >10% months 2&3	...	...	...	11.7

continued next page.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Notes for Table 7.4.

Columns 1 and 2 give the percentage of the predicted difference in "Likelihood of GED Completion" accounted for by each of the independent variables in the analysis. The sample for column 1 comprises high school dropouts who entered at the beginning of the program year. The coefficients come from table 7A.3, Col. 1. The sample for column 2 comprises only youth with positive terminations from YouthBuild. The coefficients come from table 7A.3, Col. 2.

Columns 3 and 4 give the percentage of the predicted difference in "Likelihood of Positive Termination (PT)" accounted for by each of the independent variables in the analysis. The sample for column 3 comprises the full sample, including late entrants. Coefficients come from table 7A.1, column 3. Column 4 is similar to column 3, but the sample is youth who lasted at least through the third month of the program before termination -- long enough to be included in measures of absenteeism for months 2 and 3. The coefficients for column 4 are from table 7A.2, column 3.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

rates, trainees who actually achieved the outcome and those who did not.[77]

Columns 1 and 2 of table 7.4 concern GED completion and cover only those participants who entered the program without high school degrees or GEDs. Columns 3 and 4 concern positive terminations. Even though high school graduates make the latter two columns imperfectly comparable to the first two, we know from other calculations (e.g., see table 7.3 that includes only dropouts) that the general impressions one gets from comparing the columns of table 7.4 are valid: several indices tend to be more important for predicting positive terminations than for predicting GED completions, and vice versa.

Age, years of schooling and life style variables together account for a large share of the predicted difference in positive termination rates. Life style variables are important for predicting GED completion as well (column 1), but less so when one restricts the comparison to be among youth who had positive terminations (column 2). However, the big difference between the story for positive termination and GED completion is that goals, basic skills and strategy beliefs concerning control are much more important for predicting GED completion. Age and years of schooling do not help in predicting GED completion.

CONCLUSION

Both bivariate and multivariate findings in this chapter show that the probability of positive termination depends on factors that are logically related to both social and developmental engagement, but measures related to social engagement and maturity (absenteeism, relationships, life style and age) are the most important. These are different from the predictors that are most important for the GED. Indeed, the analysis finds that the likelihood of completing the GED varies widely among participants who have quite similar chances for positive termination.

---

[77] Actually, to be more precise, but perhaps not as clear, the simulations are for hypothetical trainees whose characteristics equal the average characteristics among actual trainees who achieved each associated outcome.

The analysis finds that the probability of completing the GED is highest when several conditions exist: GED completion and construction training are "most important" to the participant as reasons for joining YouthBuild and he or she has an above-average degree of belief even at the beginning of the program that effort and knowledge are more important than chance in shaping life outcomes. In addition, a base-line indicator of basic reading and math skills is a highly statistically significant predictor for GED completion but not for positive termination.

As the next chapter discusses, research such as this concerning the rates at which participants with particular characteristics succeed or fail in the program, and why, can be quite useful in helping to frame and calibrate decisions about recruitment, screening, admissions and standards of accountability, including targets for program performance.

APPENDIX 7A

MULTIVARIATE METHODOLOGY AND TECHNICAL DISCUSSION

The multivariate estimation technique applied here is called probit. Probit is designed to handle dependent variables that have only two values, for example, "yes = 1" and "no = 0." This is the form for both dependent variables in this part of the study, POSITIVE TERMINATION and GED COMPLETION. Following a bit more anticipatory discussion, tables below introduce probit estimates. While the signs of the estimated coefficients in those tables show whether a variable's estimated effect is positive or negative, the numerical magnitudes must be transformed before they can be interpreted in intuitive language. We offer more intuitive interpretations in the chapter's main text and in the next chapter, aided by additional exhibits.

The numbers in parentheses in the tables of probit regression results are t-statistics. The t-statistic needs to be at least 1.65 to produce a 90 percent level of confidence that the effect is different from zero; at least 1.96 for a 95 percent confidence level; and at least 2.58 for the 99 percent level. Higher t-statistics justify higher levels of confidence that effects are real. They also allow more certainty that the *actual* magnitudes of the effects are close to the *estimated* values. The most conventional standard for declaring statistical significance is the 95 percent confidence level. However, findings that are significant at the 90 percent level may also be regarded as highly suggestive and are often taken seriously if the theory justifies a strong prior expectation that the variable should matter.

Two-hundred and fifty-nine youth completed the base-line questionnaire on life styles and attitudes, for an average of 26 per site-year. Of these, roughly 15 percent are not in the analysis of positive terminations and GEDs because they left the program for reasons that cannot easily be classified as "positive" or "negative" terminations, such as moves and deaths. In addition, a few were still enrolled in YouthBuild at the time that data collection ended. Roughly 100 trainees entered the program at various times during mid-cycle after the base-line questionnaire on life styles and attitudes was completed.[78]

A separate questionnaire collected demographic and other background data. Since the demographic and background data concern mostly stable characteristics of the trainee, rather than life styles and attitudes, the answers do not change if collected after the beginning of a trainee's life in the program. Hence, this questionnaire was completed for virtually all trainees.[79] Variables in the analysis that come from this latter questionnaire include age, years of schooling, felony convictions, race, sex and high school graduation or GED status.

We show some estimates for samples that include only the trainees who began at the beginning of the cycle and therefore completed the questionnaire on life styles and attitudes. The same tables show other estimates for more complete samples that include all of the trainees for whom data are available on positive termination. In the latter case, sample means from each respective site-year are used to replace the missing values on life style and strategy belief variables for trainees who entered the program late. In addition, when a trainee skipped a question, the average for other trainees for that site-year is used to approximate the missing value. Roughly 7 percent of trainees who completed questionnaires skipped at least one of the questions that the analysis here uses.[80]

Another source of variation in sample sizes in regressions is that measures of early engagement with the program are available only for youth who stayed around long enough to produce observations on the relevant variables. Our measure of absenteeism covers the trainee's second and third months of participation and is a missing value for any trainee who was not in the program for at least three months. Hence, regression equations that include absenteeism as a predictor have fewer observations because they include only trainees who lasted for at least three months.

---

[78] In most cases, the research team was not aware in advance that new trainees were entering mid-cycle and staff at the sites did not make sure that the questionnaire was completed for these trainees. A disproportionate number of these cases are from one site.

[79] A small unknown (to us) number who quit before this questionnaire could be administered to them are missing from our sample.

[80] Dummy variables are included in estimated equations for observations where a site-year mean replaces missing data. These dummy variables do not affect the other estimated coefficients and are never themselves statistically significant in the equations for positive termination and GED completion. The coefficients are not shown in the tables, but are available from the author.

The variables that measure relationships for the first few months use all of the data on relationships that each site provided during months 2 through 4 of the cycle. If a trainee was not in the program in the third and fourth months, but was present in the second month, his relationship rating simply uses the second month.

Results reported for GED completion use only the high school dropouts in the sample. In addition, to control for the length of the "treatment," we use only those who were present from the beginning of the regular program cycle in the analysis of GED COMPLETION. Results for positive terminations come from equations estimated on the pooled data for dropouts and high school graduates.

Site-Year Effects

An important way that the columns in each table of probit regression results differ from one another is in whether they include "site-year effects." Site-year effects are dichotomous variables, one for each site-year. The estimated coefficients for these variables capture systematic differences in outcomes among the sites that are not accounted for by the other included variables. The estimated coefficients for the site-year effects are not shown, but the bottom line of each column of results shows a "Y" for "yes," or an "N" for "no," to indicate whether site-year effects were included in the estimated equation.[81]

In order to discover why the site-year effects are statistically important, it is instructive to examine the results from statistical specifications that include measures of the learning environment instead of the site-year effects. These include two columns in each of tables 7A.1, 7A.2 and 7A.3. Variables that measure the learning environment account for less of the total site-to-site variation in outcomes than do the site-year effects, but finding that coefficients on variables that measure the learning environment are statistically significant provides clues concerning why the site-year effects are statistically important. The findings shown here in the tables and discussed in the body of the chapter suggest that our measures of the learning environment do account from some of why the site-year effects are statistically important.

Strategy Beliefs

Recall that the sample for table 7A.2 includes only trainees who were enrolled at least through the end of the third month. The fact that table 7A.2 is estimated on this sample that excludes early leavers, while table 7A.1 makes no such exclusion, is the only difference between the first four columns of table 7A.1 and the last four columns of table 7A.2. Not surprisingly, comparing these two sets of columns shows that the estimated effect of NICE is smaller and less statistically significant (though still significant) when the early leavers are excluded from the sample, as in table 7A.2. Apparently, the effects that table 7A.1 measures occur at least partially before the end of the third month: youth whose strategy beliefs regarding relationships are a problem tend to leave the program early.

Second, the first four columns of table 7A.2 all include both NICE and staff-youth relationship ratings as explanatory variables. The last four include NICE but exclude relationship ratings. Comparing the first four columns of the table to the last four, shows that the measured effect of NICE on positive terminations is smaller and less statistically significant when staff youth relationship ratings are controlled. Hence, as one might expect, the effect of NICE on the likelihood of positive termination appears to operate at least partially through the effect that NICE has on the formation of good staff-youth relationships.[82]

---

[81] A single estimated equation cannot produce coefficient estimates for both site-year effects and other variables that have only one value for each site-year. The variables that measure the learning environment at the site fit this description -- each has only one value per site-year, not per trainee. Hence, estimated equations can include either the learning environment variables or the site year effects, but not both.

The dependent variable for table 7A.3 is GED COMPLETION. The sample for columns 1, 3 and 5 includes all of the high school dropouts who started at the beginning of the program cycle -- groups N, P and G, as defined above. The sample for columns 2, 4 and 6 includes only those who completed the program -- groups P and G. Recall from table 7.3 that NICE helps to distinguish N from P and G, but it does not distinguish G from P. This remains true in the multivariate findings for GED completion shown in table 7A.3: NICE is statistically significant in two of the three equations (columns 3 and 5) that include group N in the sample. However, NICE is statistically significant in none of the equations where the sample excludes N. Therefore, it appears that NICE is significant in columns 3 and 5 only because it affects positive terminations, and not because it affects who earns the GED among those who earn positive terminations.

CONTROL is the other variable that measures strategy beliefs. Comparing tables 7A.1 and 7A.2 shows that the effect of CONTROL on positive terminations is more negative and statistically significant in table 7A.2, which excludes youth who left the program without positive terminations before the third month. The reason that CONTROL has a more strongly negative effect in table 7A.2 is that the average value of CONTROL is lower for youth who left in the first two months than for youth who dropped out later.

---

[82] The residual effect that NICE has on positive terminations after relationship ratings are controlled does not reach conventional levels of statistical significance, but its magnitude is large enough to suggest that the relationship rating may not be capturing its full effect.

In contrast to the negative effect that CONTROL appears to have on the likelihood of POSITIVE TERMINATION, youth with higher values of CONTROL are more likely to complete the GED. This is true in both bivariate and multivariate analyses. As suggested by the discussion above, the predicted effect of CONTROL on GED COMPLETION is strongest in the specifications that include only those youth who earned positive terminations. This is because these specifications include the youth with the highest values (group G) and the lowest values (group P) for control.

TABLE 7A.1

PROBIT MULTIPLE REGRESSION ESTIMATES FOR POSITIVE TERMINATION

Measuring from the Beginning of the Program and Excluding Measures of Early Engagement
(Positive Termination = 1; Negative Termination = 0)
(t-statistics in parentheses)

Column:	1	2	3	4	5	6
Independent Variables:						
	Learning Environment at the Site					
EARLY RELATIONSHIPS (Site-Year's Mean)	...	...	...	...	-0.254	-0.092
					(3.42)	(1.70)
GED&CONSTRUCTION TEACHER QUALITY (Site-Year's Mean from YOP Survey)	...	...	...	...	0.278	0.090
					(2.78)	(1.79)
	Basic Skills at Base Line					
BASIC SKILLS (Self Assessment of Adequacy for Employment)	0.102	0.098	0.100	0.102	0.107	0.102
	(1.50)	(1.63)	(1.96)	(2.13)	(1.62)	(2.18)
	Strategy Beliefs at Base Line					
NICE	0.195	0.169	0.181	0.164	0.211	0.173
	(2.96)	(2.82)	(3.08)	(2.80)	(3.24)	(2.88)
CONTROL	-0.193	-0.113	-0.191	-0.153	-0.147	-0.171
	(1.78)	(1.21)	(1.99)	(1.94)	(1.49)	(2.17)
	Life Style and Reward Structures at Base Line					
EXPECTED INCOME POTENTIAL IS HIGHER IN LEGAL EMPLOYMENT	0.085	0.082	0.109	0.098	0.088	0.097
	(1.35)	(1.54)	(1.76)	(1.79)	(1.44)	(1.71)
EXPECT DIFFICULTY FINDING WORK AT $5/HOUR	-0.000	0.025	0.017	0.020	0.036	0.035
	(0.00)	(0.33)	(0.24)	(0.30)	(0.49)	(0.55)
MARIJUANA	-0.194	-0.184	-0.166	-0.159	-0.216	-0.169
	(4.23)	(4.19)	(3.97)	(3.85)	(4.70)	(4.51)
FELONY CONVICTION	-0.639	-0.649	-0.483	-0.515	-0.676	-0.531
	(2.30)	(2.99)	(2.84)	(3.81)	(2.84)	(3.52)
HANGOUT	-0.046	-0.050	-0.048	-0.088	-0.050	-0.074
	(0.28)	(0.34)	(0.33)	(0.65)	(0.33)	(0.55)
KIDCARE	0.096	0.091	0.064	0.079	0.081	0.065
	(1.05)	(1.06)	(0.68)	(0.88)	(0.86)	(0.70)
	Goals at Base Line					
WANT&EXPECT GED	0.095	0.093	0.077	0.076	0.068	0.058
	(1.53)	(1.77)	(1.36)	(1.46)	(1.31)	(1.23)
WANT CONSTRUCTION	0.071	0.080	0.083	0.123	0.055	0.105
	(0.69)	(0.77)	(0.87)	(1.61)	(0.59)	(1.35)

continued next page.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Table 7A.1, continued.

Column:	1	2	3	4	5	6
Independent Variables:						
			Other Characteristics at Base Line			
AGE	0.055	0.116	0.100	0.111	0.063	0.106
	(1.02)	(3.50)	(2.90)	(3.92)	(1.23)	(3.78)
YEARS OF SCHOOLING	0.200	0.157	0.180	0.182	0.151	0.172
	(1.19)	(0.99)	(1.26)	(1.39)	(0.99)	(1.29)
HIGH SCHOOL GRAD.	-0.025	0.168	0.253	0.323	0.144	0.320
	(0.07)	(0.65)	(0.99)	(1.48)	(0.55)	(1.42)
MALE	0.083	0.240	0.090	0.193	0.151	0.153
	(0.23)	(0.81)	(0.48)	(1.05)	(0.43)	(0.81)
BLACK	-0.013	0.033	0.171	0.178	0.073	0.175
	(0.09)	(0.23)	(1.14)	(1.31)	(0.51)	(1.26)
CONSTANT	-2.520	-3.543	-3.364	-3.854	-2.218	-3.568
	(1.14)	(1.76)	(2.08)	(2.61)	(1.06)	(2.39)
Site Year Effects?	Y	N	Y	N	N	N
Psuedo R-Square:	.2435	.1998	.2121	.2018	.2232	.2056
Number of Observations:	222	222	336	336	222	336

Note: White-Huber method used to adjust standard errors for grouping by site-year.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

TABLE 7A.2

PROBIT MULTIPLE REGRESSION ESTIMATES FOR POSITIVE TERMINATION

Measuring from the Third Month On and Including Measures of Early Engagement
(Positive Termination = 1; Negative Termination = 0)
(t-statistics bottom line of each pair)

Column:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Independent Variables:								
				Learning Environment at the Site				
EARLY RELATIONSHIPS	...	-0.363	...	-0.091	...	...	...	...
(Site-Year's Mean)		(3.08)		(0.82)				
GED&CONSTRUCTION TEACHER	...	0.522	...	0.215	...	...	...	...
QUALITY (Site-Year's Mean		(3.736)		(2.68)				
from YOP Survey)								
				Measures of Early Engagement with the Program				
TRAINEE ABSENT MORE	-0.894	-0.754	-0.688	-0.665	...	...	...	...
THAN 10% OF MTHS 2&3	(3.44)	(3.53)	(3.06)	(3.32)				
EARLY RELATIONSHIP RATING	0.395	0.312	0.251	0.234	...	...	...	...
(Minus Site-Year's Mean)	(3.42)	(2.99)	(2.52)	(2.49)				
				Basic Skills at Base Line				
BASIC SKILLS (Self Assessment	0.078	0.060	0.041	0.052	0.018	0.045	0.015	0.048
of Adequacy for Employment)	(1.20)	(1.24)	(1.05)	(1.40)	(0.37)	(1.07)	(0.37)	(1.29)
				Strategy Beliefs at Base Line				
NICE	0.126	0.175	0.143	0.132	0.160	0.121	0.162	0.127
	(1.08)	(1.46)	(1.57)	(1.28)	(1.98)	(1.65)	(2.39)	(1.68)
CONTROL	-0.429	-0.297	-0.329	-0.276	-0.312	-0.152	-0.260	-0.188
	(3.03)	(2.24)	(2.50)	(2.46)	(2.51)	(1.47)	(2.63)	(2.02)
				Life Style and Reward Structures at Base Line				
EXPECTED INCOME POTENTIAL IS	0.138	0.152	0.152	0.133	0.188	0.113	0.167	0.119
HIGHER IN LEGAL EMPLOYMENT	(2.92)	(2.95)	(3.52)	(2.74)	(3.76)	(2.08)	(3.51)	(2.27)
EXPECT DIFFICULTY FINDING	-0.171	-0.062	-0.105	-0.031	-0.061	-0.000	-0.049	0.007
WORK AT $5/HOUR	(2.93)	(1.11)	(2.59)	(0.79)	(0.80)	(0.00)	(0.82)	(0.12)
MARIJUANA	-0.140	-0.182	-0.098	-0.126	-0.207	-0.172	-0.141	-0.147
	(2.43)	(3.49)	(1.93)	(3.04)	(4.22)	(4.19)	(3.45)	(3.75)
FELONY CONVICTION	-0.488	-0.583	-0.521	-0.591	-0.732	-0.685	-0.615	-0.630
	(1.50)	(2.55)	(2.38)	(3.72)	(2.07)	(2.84)	(2.88)	(4.26)
HANGOUT	0.145	0.076	0.086	0.036	0.042	0.014	0.021	-0.019
	0.706	0.406	0.536	0.243	0.217	0.085	0.136	-0.129
KIDCARE	0.372	0.295	0.264	0.234	0.311	0.261	0.219	0.229
	(5.04)	(3.31)	(3.42)	(2.94)	(3.90)	(2.96)	(2.41)	(2.53)
				Goals at Base Line				
WANT&EXPECT GED	0.234	0.192	0.158	0.130	0.158	0.178	0.111	0.140
	(2.85)	(2.65)	(2.77)	(2.87)	(2.72)	(3.35)	(2.20)	(3.10)
WANT CONSTRUCTION	-0.006	-0.043	0.058	0.030	0.056	0.065	0.103	0.119
	(0.03)	(0.36)	(0.47)	(0.32)	(0.46)	(0.61)	(0.97)	(1.48)

continued next page.

Table 7A.2, continued.

Column:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Independent Variables:								
		Other Characteristics at Base Line (see note below)						
AGE	0.085	0.090	0.099	0.098	0.068	0.146	0.103	0.112
	(1.12)	(1.22)	(2.30)	(2.54)	(0.99)	(3.34)	(2.70)	(3.20)
YEARS OF SCHOOLING	0.543	0.302	0.301	0.228	0.538	0.277	0.354	0.256
	(3.88)	(2.96)	(2.49)	(2.16)	(3.20)	(1.79)	(2.92)	(2.24)
HIGH SCHOOL GRAD.	-0.934	-0.255	-0.016	0.233	-0.557	-0.087	0.039	0.161
	(3.42)	(1.51)	(0.03)	(0.78)	(1.72)	(0.37)	(0.10)	(0.57)
CONSTANT	-5.858	-3.932	-3.611	-3.356	-5.647	-5.236	-4.310	-4.260
	(3.07)	(2.12)	(2.45)	(2.54)	(2.59)	(2.77)	(2.97)	(3.17)
MALE	0.428	0.528	0.092	0.201	0.416	0.469	0.076	0.198
	0.896	1.194	0.310	0.648	0.953	1.448	0.287	0.779
BLACK	-0.136	0.173	0.089	0.144	-0.285	-0.095	-0.058	0.008
	-0.617	0.764	0.395	0.671	-1.094	-0.468	-0.255	0.040
Site-Year Effects:	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N
Psuedo R-Square:	.4581	.3950	.3250	.3009	.3664	.2578	.2696	.2319
Number of Observations:	202	202	296	296	202	202	296	296

Note: White-Huber method used to adjust standard errors for grouping by site-year.

TABLE 7A.3

PROBIT MULTIPLE REGRESSION ESTIMATES FOR GED COMPLETION
for High School Dropouts who began at the Start of the Regular Cycle
(Completed GED = 1; Did not complete = 0)
(t-statistics in parentheses)

Column:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Independent Variables:							
			Learning Environment at the Site				
EARLY RELATIONSHIPS (Site-Year's Mean)	...	...	-0.426	-0.266	...	...	...
			(2.46)	(1.42)			
GED TEACHER QUALITY (Site-Year's Mean from YOP Survey)	...	...	0.303	0.213	...	...	...
			(2.14)	(1.21)			
			Measures of Early Engagement with the Program				
TRAINEE ABSENT MORE THAN 10% OF MTHS 2&3	...	...	...	...	...	...	-0.108
							(0.52)
EARLY RELATIONSHIP RATING (Minus Site-Year's Mean)	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.079
							(0.64)
			Basic Skills at Base Line				
BASIC SKILLS (Self Assessment of Adequacy for Employment)	0.411	0.486	0.321	0.343	0.299	0.336	0.344
	(4.27)	(3.70)	(4.63)	(4.01)	(4.02)	(3.67)	(3.27)
			Strategy Beliefs at Base Line				
NICE	0.125	-0.014	0.207	0.088	0.173	0.068	0.112
	(1.41)	(0.10)	(2.42)	(0.68)	(1.99)	(0.53)	(1.12)
CONTROL	0.328	0.588	0.282	0.457	0.321	0.493	0.289
	(2.04)	(3.43)	(2.08)	(3.47)	(2.32)	(3.78)	(1.67)
			Life Style and Reward Structures at Base Line				
EXPECTED INCOME POTENTIAL IS HIGHER IN LEGAL EMPLOYMENT	0.103	0.113	0.071	0.068	0.087	0.061	0.104
	(1.06)	(0.68)	(0.94)	(0.67)	(1.05)	(0.60)	(1.03)
EXPECT DIFFICULTY FINDING WORK AT $5/HOUR	-0.200	-0.162	-0.142	-0.182	-0.185	-0.205	-0.207
	(2.36)	(2.48)	(1.62)	(2.00)	(2.16)	(2.30)	(2.48)
MARIJUANA	-0.115	-0.103	-0.143	-0.173	-0.102	-0.151	-0.082
	(0.82)	(0.77)	(1.26)	(1.60)	(0.90)	(1.51)	(0.69)
FELONY CONVICTION	-1.291	-0.892	-1.118	-0.583	-0.943	-0.478	-1.012
	(3.33)	(1.47)	(4.02)	(1.84)	(3.15)	(1.46)	(2.78)
HANGOUT	-0.223	-0.126	-0.174	-0.118	-0.172	-0.103	-0.197
	(1.86)	(0.64)	(1.76)	(0.68)	(1.69)	(0.64)	(1.57)
KIDCARE	-0.119	-0.078	-0.129	-0.166	-0.119	-0.165	-0.074
	(0.96)	(0.42)	(1.07)	(0.92)	(1.23)	(0.96)	(0.49)
			Goals at Base Line				
WANT&EXPECT GED	0.463	0.573	0.460	0.515	0.468	0.549	0.457
	(3.14)	(2.70)	(3.71)	(3.19)	(3.23)	(3.31)	(3.37)
WANT CONSTRUCTION	0.192	0.447	0.157	0.276	0.145	0.218	0.265
	(1.85)	(2.73)	(1.72)	(1.78)	(1.40)	(1.26)	(1.88)

continued next page.

Table 7A.3, continued.

Column:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Independent Variables:							
	Other Characteristics at Base Line (see note below)						
AGE	0.055	0.062	-0.026	-0.085	0.022	-0.060	0.056
	(0.79)	(0.77)	(0.43)	(1.15)	(0.42)	(1.00)	(0.74)
YEARS OF SCHOOLING	0.113	-0.229	0.122	-0.157	0.136	-0.192	0.086
	(0.67)	(1.09)	(0.71)	(0.77)	(0.84)	(0.98)	(0.63)
MALE	0.420	-0.190	0.332	-0.115	0.430	-0.042	0.351
	1.039	-0.407	0.928	-0.275	1.412	-0.100	0.913
BLACK	-0.097	-0.313	-0.095	-0.279	-0.168	-0.350	-0.064
	-0.350	-0.810	-0.369	-0.808	-0.753	-1.175	-0.217
CONSTANT	-3.439	0.391	-1.353	3.300	-2.657	3.056	-2.954
	(1.95)	(0.14)	(0.78)	(1.58)	(1.38)	(1.41)	(1.90)
SITE-YEAR EFFECTS?	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	Y
Psuedo R-Square:	.3152	.3652	.2645	.2894	.2241	.2751	.3106
Number of Observations:	166	101	166	101	166	101	149

Note: White-Huber method used to adjust standard errors for grouping by site-years.

APPENDIX 7B

OUT-OF-SAMPLE PREDICTIONS FOR POSITIVE TERMINATION

A standard way to judge the generality of statistical findings is to ask whether they produce good predictions "outside of the sample." Estimates reported above in Appendix 7A are from a data set that includes all ten site-years of the demonstration project. In order to produce out-of-sample predictions, we construct ten samples, each of which includes only nine of the ten site-years. Then, using each of the ten data sets, we estimate a set of coefficients with which to predict positive terminations.[83]

Next, we calculate a predicted positive termination rate for each site-year.[84] This prediction uses the trainee's own characteristics, but coefficients are estimated using the data set that omits the trainee's own YouthBuild program. Each of these predicted values is an outside-of-sample prediction because it is based on coefficients estimated from the *other* nine site-years; for each site year, the prediction shows what the positive termination rate would have been if the site had operated like the composite of the other nine (while serving its own actual trainees).

Figure 7B.1 shows the actual positive termination rates and the values from the out-of-sample predictions. For each site-year, the difference (actual-minus-predicted) appears in the parenthesis. Actual positive termination rates for site-years (excluding trainees who moved or died, etc.) range from near 40 percent to over 80 percent. While the actual and predicted rates do differ, the largest difference between actual and

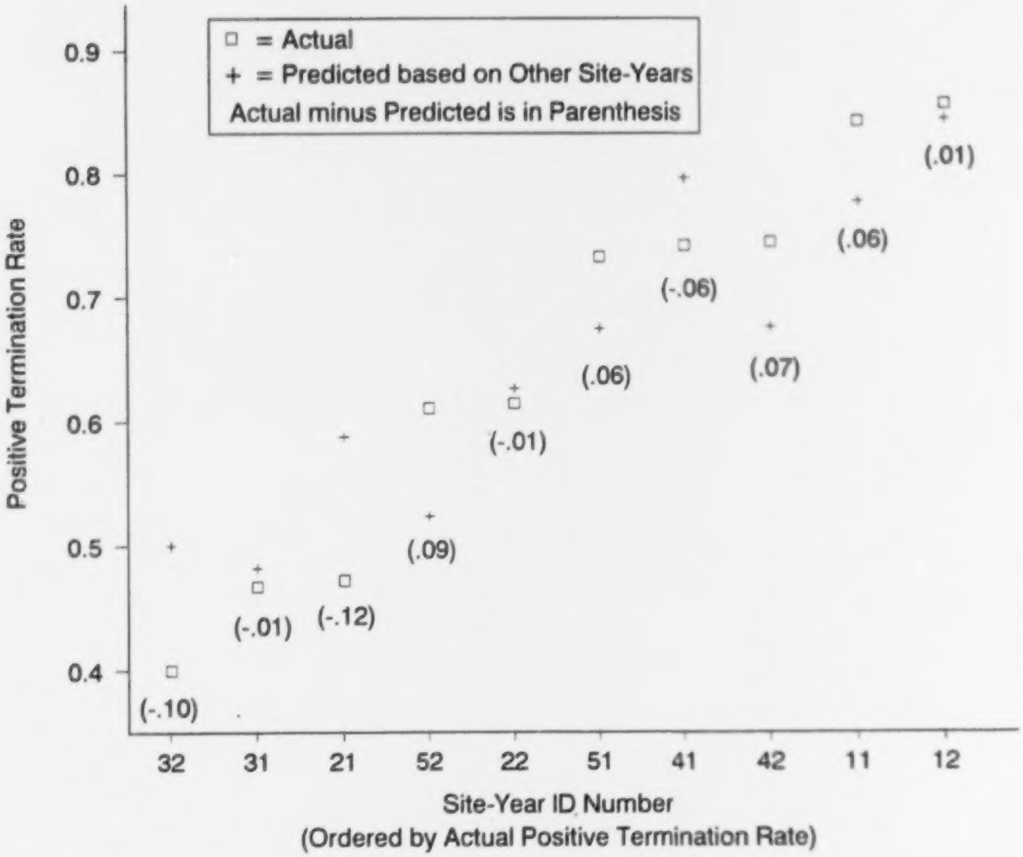
---

[83] The specification is the same as in column 4 of table 13. The result is ten sets of estimated coefficients analogous to those in column 4 of table 13.

[84] This predicted positive termination rate for the site-year is the mean for the site-year of the predicted likelihood calculated for each individual in the sample.

Figure 7B.1

Actual and Predicted Rates of Positive Termination



Note: The first digit of the site-year number represents the city and the second digit represents year 1 or year 2 of the demonstration.

predicted rates is only 0.12 (for site-year #21). Hence, nine of ten outside-of-sample predictions are within 0.10 of the actual positive termination rate. For a site with 30 participants, 0.10 represents 3 participants. Moreover, the rank order of predicted values among the site-years is quite close to the rank order of the actual values.

Differences between actual and predicted values follow a pattern close to what an informed observer would expect. For example, site-year #42, which we know from visits and interviews was a very well run program, has a higher-than-predicted positive termination rate. The same site a year earlier, site-year #41, had managerial problems and the program manager was not rehired. Hence, it is not surprising that the positive termination rate for site-year #41 is slightly less than predicted. Similarly, site-year #32 had serious managerial problems and has a lower-than-predicted rate.[85]

The actual positive termination rate for site-year #21 is the furthest below the out-of-sample prediction. We know from site visits that this site-year had a mostly strong staff and management. However, a persistent problem for this site-year was its inability to find appropriate construction projects for training. In addition, several members of the staff were inexperienced and took several months to get up to speed. Our interviews suggest that these features of the program led some trainees to lose interest, and to quit.

Similar out-of-sample predictions exist for GED completion, but we will not present them here. For GED completion, a few of the gaps between actual and out-of-sample predictions are quite large. We know from our qualitative work that some sites were much more committed and skilled than others at producing GEDs. See chapter 9.

---

[85] In chapter _, we show that the same site had a higher-than-predicted GED completion rate, but this may be because it awards high school degrees that do not require a special examination like the GED does.

CHAPTER 8

SIMULATIONS FOR JUDGING PROGRAM PERFORMANCE AND SETTING PERFORMANCE TARGETS

Judgments concerning performance affect resource allocation. For example, program managers note where they have or have not met their own standards and then they make adjustments that reallocate money, time and attention. Based on judgments about the adequacy of performance, funders make decisions about financial support. Providers of technical assistance make decisions that allocate effort across competing alternatives. In every case, formal or informal standards exist and perceptions of performance have meaning *relative to* those standards. What standards for positive termination and GED completion rates seem reasonable for YouthBuild?

Even with the best personnel using implementation practices that are the state of the art, programs that serve the most difficult to serve trainees will produce lower rates of positive termination and GED completion than others that use similar practices but serve easier clientele. Of course, in reality, site-years differ as well in the quality of their personnel and implementation practices. In order to frame a comparative discussion regarding site-years of the YouthBuild demonstration, the presentation below refers to "flagship" and "troubled" standards of comparison. "Flagship" standards represent the site-year with the best practices that we observed during the demonstration. "Troubled" standards represent the worst.[86] We compare the quality of site-years by examining the differences in performance that remain among sites after measured characteristics of trainees are taken into account.

Below, we present a series of simulations based on the estimates from chapter 7.

---

[86] No connotation is intended that sites are permanently flagships or troubled. Ideally, performance will converge toward flagship standards over time, but change in either direction is possible.

Under various assumptions about sites-years and trainees, we compare the actual performance of site-years with what performance might have been if they had operated by flagship or troubled standards. Examining performance relative to these standards presents a much different picture than the unadjusted rates of GED completion and positive termination. In this way, the chapter makes clear that it would be inappropriate to judge all sites relative to a single standard for positive termination or GED completion rates. At the same time, it is clear that the criteria that sites use in recruiting, screening and selecting program participants sites can go a long way toward pre-determining program outcomes.

INTERPRETING SITE-YEAR EFFECTS

Recall from the last chapter the variables that measure the learning environment at the site. Each has one value per site-year. Some versions of our estimation procedures use these and some use "site-year effects," instead. The site-year effects are more complete in what they measure, but less specific. In predicting positive terminations or GED completions, estimated site-year effects soak up the effect of all site-specific differences not accounted for by the individual-level variables in the analysis. These site-specific differences include effects due to the learning environment, and more. Our proxies for the learning environment add roughly half as much explanatory power to the estimated results as the site-year effects add.

Since the site-year effects (as well as our proxies for the learning environment) are bound to be capturing at least some omitted differences across sites in the characteristics of trainees, the site-year effect constitutes an upper bound on the contribution of staffing and management. Hence, the actual effects due to differences in the quality of personnel and implementation are likely to be somewhat smaller than what we represent in what follows, but we do not know by how much.

We think that the site-year effects are primarily capturing differences in program quality, but we cannot document it with precision. Through extensive interviewing at each of the sites, we are familiar anecdotally with many differences in staffing and management qualities that the site-year effects appear to be capturing. The rank ordering of estimated site-year effects conforms well with what our impressions of personnel and implementation qualities would have lead us to expect.

In the simulations presented below, we match estimated site-year effects from "flagship" and "troubled" sites with the characteristics of trainees from other sites. For each site-year, we estimate what the positive termination and GED completion rates might have been for trainees if they had attended the flagship or the troubled site-years, instead of their own.

In order to distinguish sites from one another, the exhibits and text refer to site-years by two-digit identification numbers. The first digit is the city and the second is the cycle. Based upon many interviews and site visits over the term of the demonstration project, we (and YouthBuild USA) judge that site-year #42 (i.e., city #4, cycle #2) was the "flagship" of the demonstration in the quality of its implementation practices. Site-years #31 and #32 experienced the most managerial turmoil and were the most "troubled." These judgments regarding which were flagship and troubled sites generally are confirmed by differences in outcomes among the sites that remain unexplained statistically, after taking into account the measured characteristics of trainees.

SIMULATIONS FOR POSITIVE TERMINATION

Often, observers assume that trainees at different sites are so similar to one another that observed differences in measures such as positive termination rates are due mostly due to differences in the quality of implementation. It is surely logical to expect that sites managed in ways that are caring and interesting will engage participants more successfully and will have higher positive termination rates than sites that are less caring or interesting. It is also logical, however, that sites whose trainees are most "ready" for YouthBuild at the base line will tend to have more positive terminations. Without the type of analysis that we present here, it is difficult to come even close to knowing what share of observed differences are due to the quality of program delivery as opposed to the characteristics of trainees.

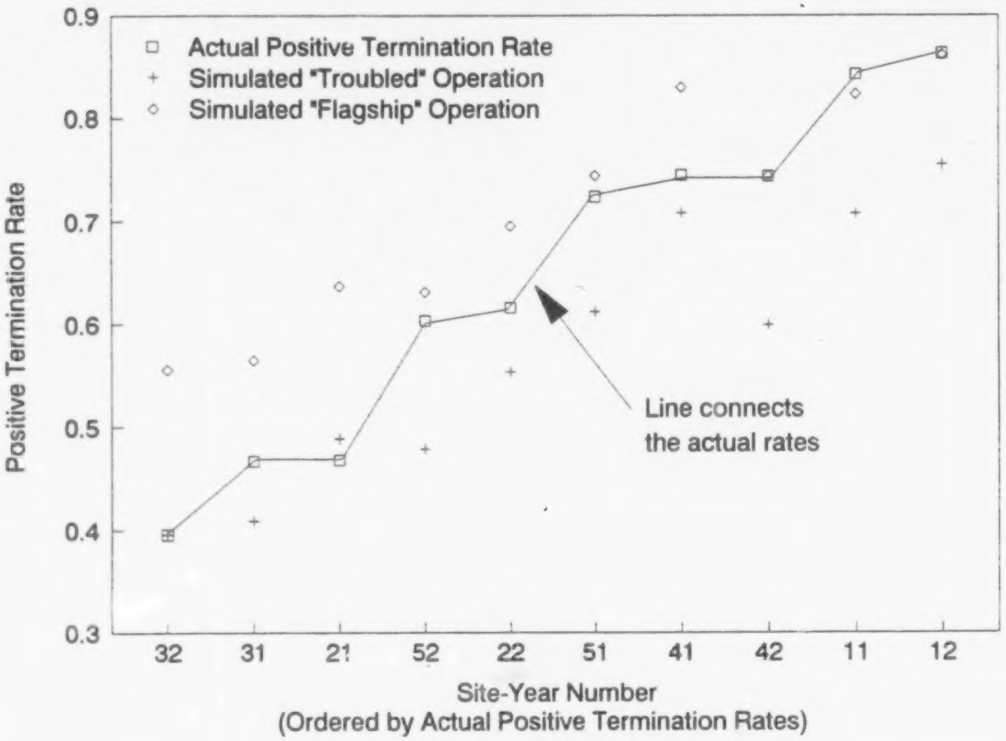
Recall the discussion immediately above regarding the interpretation of site-year effects. Here, we follow that discussion and assume that site-year effects are primarily capturing differences in the quality of program delivery. Given that assumption, we begin with figure 8.1. Figure 8.1 allows us to compare the actual positive termination rates that sites achieved with what they might have achieved operating at flagship or troubled standards.

The site-years listed along the horizontal axis of figure 8.1 are in order from the lowest actual positive termination rate to the highest. To make the diagram easier to read, the jagged line through the middle of the diagram connects the points that indicate the actual rates. For each site-year, the diamond-shaped marker (usually above the line) shows what the positive termination rate would have been if the site had operated like the flagship site-year -- in other words, if it had the flagship's site-year effect instead of its own. Conversely, the plus sign (usually below the line) shows what the rate would have

FIGURE 8.1

ACTUAL AND SIMULATED POSITIVE TERMINATION RATES

A "Flagship" Standard and a "Troubled" Standard
Compared with Actual Performance



Note: Estimates for "Flagship" and "Troubled" operating standards come from substituting estimated site-year effects from site-year 42 or 32 in place of the site-year effect actually estimated for each respective site-year.

Calculated from probit regression specification in Column 3 of Table 7A.1.

been if the site had operated like the troubled site.

In our estimated equations, the difference between troubled and flagship standards is statistically significant.[87] Nevertheless, the corresponding difference in positive termination rates is not especially large compared to the gap between the actual positive termination rates for the flagship and troubled site-years. On average, the difference between flagship and troubled standards produces a difference in the positive termination rate of about 0.15 (equal to 4.5 trainees per cycle, on a base of 30 trainees). Compare this with the difference of 0.34 between the actual positive termination rates for the flagship site-year and troubled site-years. Indeed, it appears that more than half of the difference in positive termination rates between the flagship and troubled site-years is the result of base-line differences in participants. Hence, at least regarding positive terminations, the flagship is not as superior to the troubled site-year as a simpler analysis might suggest.[88]

Figure 8.1 reveals other interesting patterns as well. For example, site-year #52 had a relatively low positive termination rate in absolute terms, but was still near the flagship standard.[89] Conversely, site-year #41 had a relatively high positive termination rate in absolute terms, but was closer to the troubled standard. Indeed, given the base-line characteristics of their participants, site-year #52 operating at a flagship standard would have produce a lower positive termination rate than site-year #41 operating at a troubled standard.

Further, note that site #4 moved from near the troubled standard in year one (site-year #41) to become the flagship (site-year #42) in year two, even though the positive termination rate was essentially the same in the two years. Year two brought a more difficult group of trainees, but the program apparently improved enough not to see a corresponding drop in the positive termination rate.

---

[87] The significance level for the difference is better than 0.01.

[88] Of course, this difference in trainees is partly due to the flagship's more effective screening methods to select trainees who are "ready."

[89] Here, however, what we know from site visits helps with the interpretation. Specifically, this site usually picked trainees up each morning and gave them rides to YouthBuild. It is certain that the positive termination rate would otherwise have been lower.

There was virtually no difference in age between participants for site-years #41 and #42. However, participants at the flagship site-year were more than three years older on average than those at the troubled site-year, #32. Older trainees had better outcomes that younger ones for the demonstration project as a whole. Why? Might some of the explanation be that older trainees attended the stronger sites?

WHY THE POSITIVE TERMINATION RATE RISES WITH AGE

A theme in both the quantitative and qualitative sections of this study is that some trainees are more ready for YouthBuild than others, and that the difference is highly correlated with age. This raises the question of whether programs should raise the threshold age from 16 to, say, 18. An analysis such as this cannot answer the question, but it can inform the debate. We can attempt to isolate the effects of age and maturity from other factors that are correlated with age, such as the quality of the site-year attended.

Figure 8.2 shows both actual and simulated positive termination rates for trainees aged 17 through 24.[90] The purpose for showing both lines is to illustrate that our estimation procedure (which for this graph includes site-year effects) is reasonably good for all age groups. No matter whether one uses the actual or the simulated rates, it is clear, for example, that 17-year-olds finish the program at less than half the rate of 23 or 24-year-olds. The actual positive termination rate jumps substantially after age 17, and rises more gradually through later ages. This jump after age 17 appears to be due partially to the fact that 17 year olds are disproportionately represented at sites with the weakest implementation practices.[91]

---

[90] Only 3 percent of trainees were younger than 17; only 7 percent were over 24.

The simulated positive termination rate is 0.37 for 17-year-olds and 0.80 for 23-year-olds. The difference of 0.43 between these rates is less than the actual difference in positive termination rates for the same two age groups, which is 0.52. Still, it is instructive to examine what accounts for the simulated difference of 0.43.

The pie diagram in figure 8.2 represents 100 percent of the simulated difference of 0.43 in positive termination rates between 17- and 23-year-olds.[92] Each labeled section of the pie shows what percentage of the simulated difference in rates is due to each explanatory variable (or set of variables). Any variable from the analysis that is not represented by some category on the diagram is not among those that caused 17-year-olds to have lower rates of positive termination.[93]

Figure 8.2 shows that 30.2 percent of the simulated difference in positive termination rates for 17- and 23-year-olds is captured by site-year effects. Apparently, 17- year-olds attended weaker sites. Also, almost 26.8 percent of the difference is due to

---

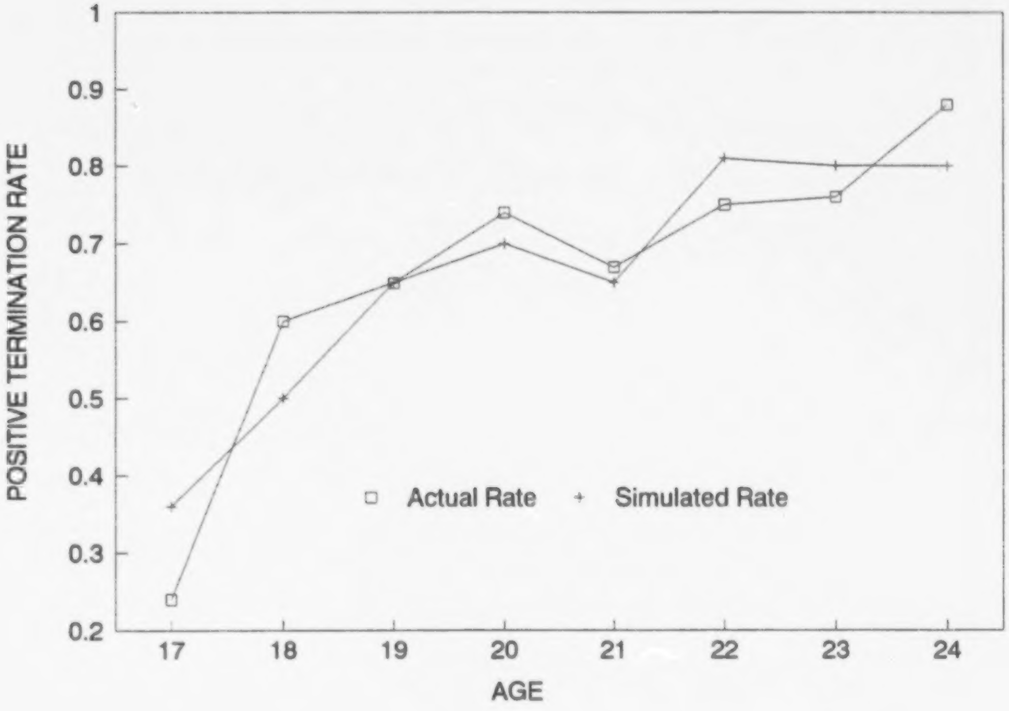
[91] Accurately measuring any nonlinearity in the effect of age was complicated by the fact that younger participants tended to be concentrated at particular site-years. There was high co-linearity between those site years and the indicator variable for age equal 17. Consequently, we had the most confidence in the results that entered age as a single linear variable, and those are the results that this paper presents. Other than the site-year effects for programs that serve mostly the younger trainees, coefficients on variables other than age are not much affected by which specification that we choose for the age variable.

[92] Actually, difference accounted for is somewhat larger than 0.43; 0.43 is the net difference, including factors that add to and detract from the overall gap. Factors listed on the pie diagram are only those that add to the difference and, hence, they alone would account for a gap slightly larger than 0.43.

[93] Variables not represented by some category on the pie diagram either accounted for zero difference or a small negative difference, meaning that the variable would lead 17-year-olds to have a slightly higher positive termination rate. Such variables include strategy beliefs (NICE and CONTROL), our variable for basic skills, race and gender and felony convictions.

FIGURE 8.2

ACTUAL AND SIMULATED POSITIVE TERMINATION RATES BY AGE
for the YouthBuild Demonstration Project



Note: Graph covers participants who began at the start of the full cycle, completed both base-line questionnaires and who left the program with either a positive or negative termination. (N=222) factors associated with age that are not otherwise measured in our analysis.

The remainder of the difference is associated with the variables listed on largest wedge of the pie. Each variable listed on this wedge is correlated with age in a manner that predicts better outcomes for older participants. Hence, the analysis suggests that 23-year-olds in YouthBuild have higher positive termination rates than 17-year-olds because they have more conventional life styles: in the months immediately prior to the program they used marijuana less frequently, hung out less, baby sat more and tried to set good examples for children. In addition, 23-year-olds had slightly more schooling (10.62 versus 10.02 years), had goals that better matched YouthBuild's offerings (for both construction and GED preparation), and were slightly more optimistic about the world of work (expecting more often that legal jobs pay more than illegal jobs).

All of the differences in the preceding paragraph add up to the conclusion that, on average, 23-year-olds who participated in the YouthBuild demonstration project were more ready than the 17-year-olds for YouthBuild. This type of evidence alone cannot answer questions regarding the social costs and benefits of serving one age group over the other, but it highlights the fact that there is likely to be a trade-off.[94]

GED COMPLETIONS

In the same way that figure 8.1 above provided flagship and troubled standards by which to judge the performance of sites with respect to positive terminations, figure 8.3 provides similar standards by which to judge their performance in producing GEDs. Site-year #42 is again taken as the flagship standard. Site-year #31 is the troubled standard.[95]

---

[94] Knowing what the tradeoff is for society at large would require knowing what each age group would have done if not for its participation in YouthBuild, and the social costs and benefits of that alternative.

[95] As in all of the analyses for GED completions, the discussion here pertains only to youth who entered the program not having already earned the GED or a high school degree.

Just as above, some sites that look superior in absolute terms, turn out to be less impressive relative to the flagship and troubled bench marks. For other sites, the reverse is true. First, note that some sites perform better than the flagship standard. Site-years #11 and #12, representing cycles 1 and 2 at site #1, are combined in this diagram because of small numbers of high school dropouts among their YouthBuild trainees who completed the base-line survey on life styles and attitudes. We know from visits that site #1 had what appeared to be a strong GED program and the possibility that it out-performed the flagship is quite plausible. The same cannot be said for site #32.[96]

Second, two sites, #21 and #51, had GED completion rates that were relatively low but, nevertheless, near the flagship standard. Given that the flagship site had almost twice the rate of GED completions as either of these sites, it would be tempting without the present analysis to assume that the flagship site was twice as effective. Conversely, site year #41 has a higher actual rate of positive termination than either #21 or #51, but it is much closer to troubled than to flagship performance.

Clearly, any comparative assessment of effectiveness for these sites regarding their production of GEDs could be quite erroneous if it simply compared their rates of GED completion. Without some standard of comparison that adjusts for the characteristics of trainees, claims that particular sites are more (or less) effective than the others will frequently be misleading.

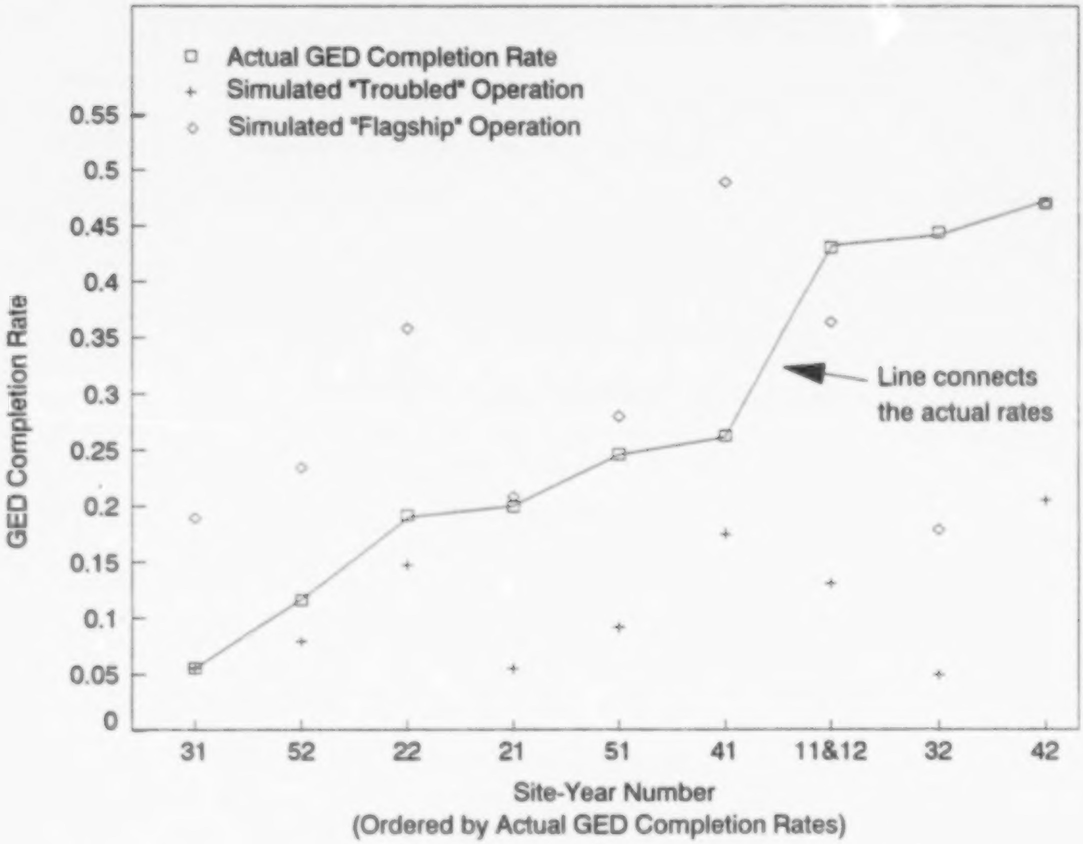
---

[96] Trainees at this site could take the GED exam just like those at other sites could. However, they could also aim for the high school degree, since the site was a satellite of the local school system. It was suggested informally to our site visitor that standards were lowered in order to produce some high school graduates from the second cycle. We cannot prove that standards really were lowered. However, results for the first cycle had been quite poor. Our estimates suggest that trainees in the second cycle had essentially the same profile as the first. For either year, even the flagship simulation for GED completion is predicted for this site to be slightly under 0.20.

FIGURE 8.3

ACTUAL AND SIMULATED RATES OF GED COMPLETION

A "Flagship" Standard and a "Troubled" Standard
Compared with Actual Performance



Note: Estimates for "Flagship" and "Troubled" operating standards come from substituting estimated site-year effects from site-year 42 or 31 in place of the site-year effect actually estimated for each respective site-year.

Calculated from probit regression specification in Column 1 of Table 7A.3.

WHY THE FLAGSHIP PRODUCES MORE GEDs

The rate of GED completion for the flagship site-year is 0.48. For the other site-years, the composite rate is 0.20.[97] What explains the difference? Figure 8.4 suggests some answers. Each wedge of the pie diagram in figure 8.4 suggests what percentage of the difference in GED completion between site-year #42 and the composite of the other site-years is due to each set of explanatory variables.

Starting with 100 percent of the difference between 0.48 and 0.20, less than one third (29.2 percent) of the difference is due to site-year effects. Hence, since site-year effects include the quality of instruction and other aspects of program delivery, we can infer that bringing other sites up to the flagship standard of program delivery would not have closed the gap in rates of GED completion by any more than 29.2 percent, and probably less. Also, variables associated with conventionality -- age, life style and optimism about employment options -- account for roughly one fifth of the difference.

Virtually all of the remaining gap is due to differences in goals for construction training and GED completion and to strategy beliefs regarding the importance of effort and knowledge as opposed to chance. We know from interviews that these are things for which site-year #42 screened in the process of recruitment and selection. Hence, from the beginning of the program, trainees at site-year #42 wanted more of what YouthBuild had to offer and believed more in the efficacy of knowledge and effort.

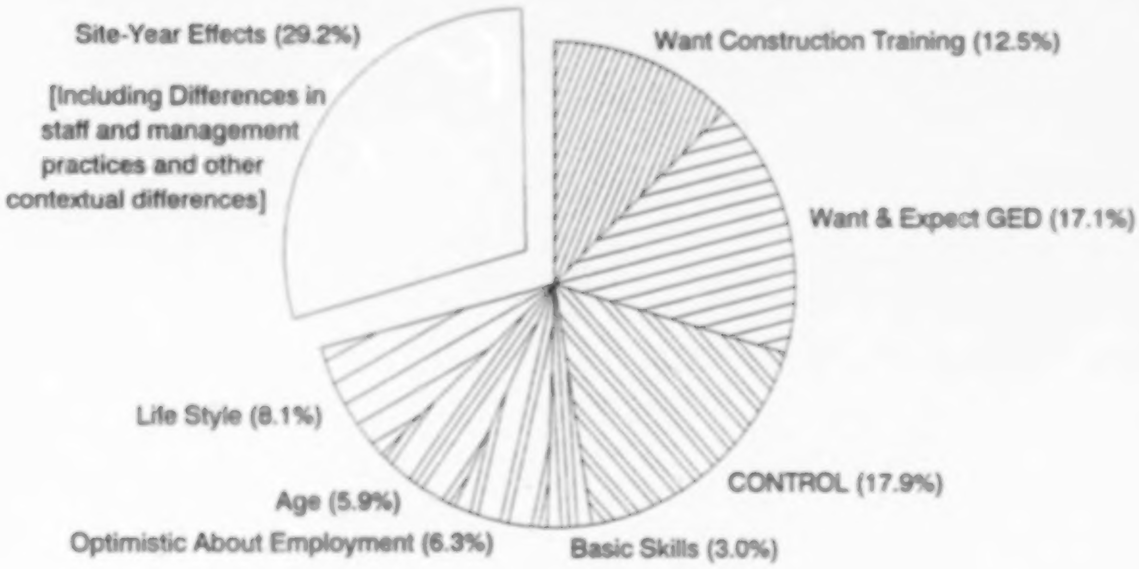
Of course, slightly more than half of the high school dropouts at site-year #42 did not earn the GED. What distinguishes them from the participants who did? Figure 8.5 is analogous to figure 8.4, but figure 8.5 compares youth at the single site-year #42 who did

---

[97] This calculation and the pie diagram in figure 8.4 omit data from site-year #32 because its rate of success was so much higher than the flagship standard. See the previous footnote.

FIGURE 8.4

WHY SITE-YEAR #42 HAS A HIGHER GED COMPLETION RATE THAN OTHER SITE-YEARS



Note: Site-Year #42 is commonly regarded as the "Flagship" of the YouthBuild Demonstration Project and therefore is an appropriate standard of comparison.

Calculated from probit regression specification in Column 1 of Table 7A.3.

complete the GED with others who did not.[98] Compare figures 8.4 and 8.5. Figure 8.5 shows that, when comparing trainees within a single site, life style can account for a large share (here, 40 percent) of the explanation for why some trainees are more likely than others to complete the GED. Hence, life style is unimportant.

Nevertheless, what figure 8.4 conveys on this point is that the demonstration sites were fairly similar in the life styles of the participants that they selected, but not in the attitudes. We know that site-year #42 was very careful in the way that it screened and selected trainees. Even though there remained important variation among the trainees that it chose, site-year #42 was more successful than others in selecting trainees who wanted what the program had to offer and who believed in the efficacy of effort and knowledge as opposed to chance. It seems unlikely that such youth are simply more plentiful in Boston than in other cities. Hence, the message is that screening practices matter.

OTHER SIMULATIONS OF GED COMPLETION

Wanting and expecting the GED, wanting construction training and having a strong belief in the efficacy of knowledge and effort as opposed to chance are strong predictors of GED completion. These predictors are represented in our analysis by the variables named "Want and Expect GED," "Want Construction Training," and CONTROL. Here, we simulate GED completion rates for different ranges of these three variables.

The horizontal axis of figure 8.6 lists percentiles from our sample for each of the three variables. Hence, for example, at the point on the horizontal axis labeled "25," each of the three variables has a value equal to the 25th percentile in the sample of high school

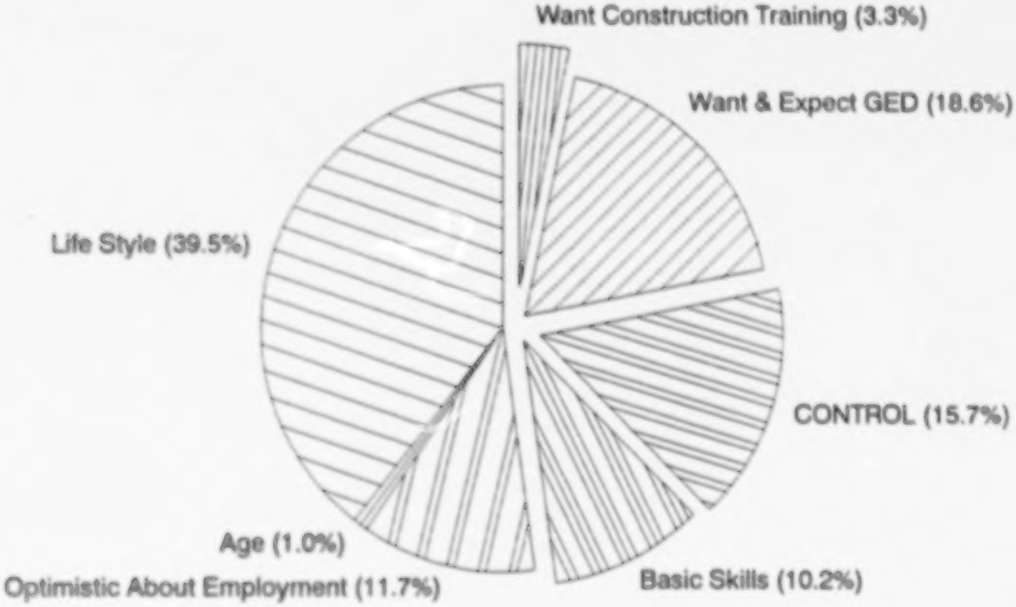
BEST COPY AVAILABLE

---

[98] Of course, there is no place for site-year effects in figure 8.5, since the trainees being compared are all from one site-year.

FIGURE 8.5

DIFFERENCES AMONG TRAINEES FOR SITE-YEAR 42
that Produce a Higher (ex-post) Predicted GED Completion Rate
for Youth who Actually Completed the GED than for those who did not



Calculated from probit regression specification in Column 1 of Table 7A.3.

dropouts from the YouthBuild demonstration. Analogous statements hold for other values along the horizontal axis, from the 5th through 95th percentiles. Everywhere on the diagram, the trainee's other characteristics are assumed constant at the sample mean. The diagram shows the simulations for flagship, typical and troubled standards.[99]

For brevity, let us call the combination of the three focal variables "predisposition" for earning the GED. Participants with a predisposition (i.e., all three variables) at the 5th or the 10th percentile are virtually certain not to earn the GED no matter which site-year they attend. Even for the flagship site, the simulated probability of earning the GED is still below 0.20 when predisposition is at the 25th percentile. Still, at every level of predisposition, the simulated likelihood of GED completion is more than twice as high using flagship standards as compared with troubled standards. Results using typical standards fall roughly in the middle.

Just as with the analysis for positive terminations, the analysis for GED completions indicates that characteristics of both sites and trainees matter for producing desired outcomes. The difference is that GED completion is associated most with variables that are not very important for predicting positive terminations. For any given site, one should expect that rates of GED completion will be higher for trainees who want and expect the GED, who have an interest in construction training and who believe that knowledge and effort will dominate chance in shaping life outcomes.

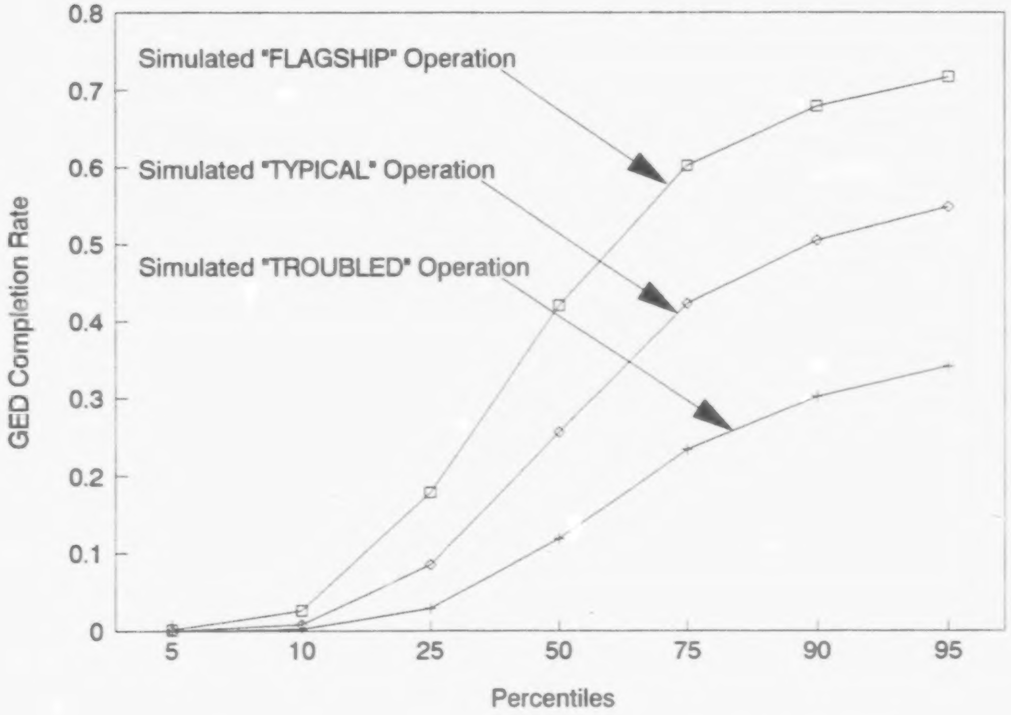
Should sites use such criteria in selecting trainees? Are sites that do so "creaming"? This analysis cannot give an answer. It does, however, make clear that rates of GED completion can be affected substantially by characteristics that recruitment and

---

[99] As above, the flagship standard uses the site-year effect estimated for site-year #42 and the troubled standard uses site-year #31. The typical standard is for site-years other than #42, #31 or #32.

FIGURE 8.6

SIMULATED GED COMPLETION RATES
by Percentiles for Three Important Predictors:
"Want & Expect GED," "Want Construction Training" and "CONTROL



Notes: Estimates assume that all explanatory variables are at their means except for the three variables: Want & Expect GED; Want Construction Training; and the index CONTROL. Along the horizontal axis, each of these latter three variables takes on the value associated with each respective percentile in the distribution among potential candidates for the GED.

Estimates use the probit regression coefficients from Column 1 of Table 7A.3. The standards "Flagship," "Typical" and "Troubled" are estimated by using site-year effects as explained in the text.

274

screening can target. If, in the effort to raise GED completion rates, a program decided to limit enrollment to high school dropouts of at least 18 (instead of 16) years of age, who profess convincingly that they want and expect to earn the GED, that they have a strong interest in construction and that they believe strongly in the efficacy of effort and knowledge, not chance, that program could find support for such a position in the results that this chapter has reported.

CONCLUSION

This chapter and the previous one show that simply comparing positive termination rates or GED completion rates across sites is not an adequate way to judge program performance. The previous chapter began by showing bivariate patterns in the relationships of various explanatory variables to rates of positive termination and GED completion. It proceeded to discuss multivariate findings for estimates that the present chapter uses in various simulations. The simulations show the fallacy of judging performance based on absolute levels of outcome variables. Examples show sites with relatively high absolute levels of performance that appear by our estimates to be performing near "troubled-site" standards and, conversely, sites with relatively low absolute levels of performance that appear by our estimates to be near "flagship" standards.

In closing, even though no set of criteria for recruitment and selection is absolutely right or wrong, this chapter has provided a basis for assessing some of the trade-offs regarding likely rates of positive terminations and GED completions from selecting trainees with particular profiles. Similarly, the paper has pointed to ways of grounding accountability standards on the characteristics of trainees and the performance of comparable site-years.

However, the rich collection of variables that we find to be important are not typically available to policy analysts. Moreover, no one model, including ours, is unassailable in its ability to identify appropriate outcome levels against which to hold programs accountable. Hence, despite the current emphasis in policy circles on outcomes-based accountability, any serious regime of accountability for programs like YouthBuild will necessarily include site visits and attention to issues of process. It is to such issues that this study now turns.

PART IV

THE PROCESS OF YOUTH TRANSFORMATION

Chapter 9 by Ronald F. Ferguson and Jason C. Snipes

Chapter 10 by Ronald F. Ferguson

CHAPTER 9

DEVELOPMENTAL TASKS AND STAGES OF THE YOUTHBUILD EXPERIENCE

INTRODUCTION

As earlier chapters have reviewed, the YouthBuild Program serves 16- to 24-year-olds who are largely disconnected from mainstream institutions. They apply to the program seeking information, social supports, skills, connections and hope. Between two thirds and three quarters are high school dropouts. YouthBuild provides counseling, basic reading and math skills, construction training for employability and leadership training for citizenship.[100] In addition, the program promises job placement for youth who finish successfully. Typically, a program cycle runs for roughly one year, full time, Monday through Friday. A site usually serves 30 to 40 young people per cycle in two teams of 15 to 20 participants who attend classes and the work site together. Currently, the majority of participants are African American and Hispanic males.[101]

This chapter develops a framework for understanding why some youth achieve personal growth and positive identity development in YouthBuild and others leave the program largely unaffected. Erik Erikson's seminal ideas regarding stages of identity development over the human life-cycle are the core of the chapter's conceptual framework. Here, however, instead of analyzing the *life* cycle, we adapt Erikson's ideas to understand a single *program* cycle of about one year. While it fits YouthBuild well, the framework is quite general. Its application to YouthBuild is only one among many potential examples of how to adapt Erikson's ideas to understand developmental processes for youth and adults alike in specific social and institutional settings.[102]

---

[100] In YouthBuild, leadership means "taking responsibility for making things go right" in one's personal life, one's family, in the YouthBuild program and in the community.

[101] Roughly two thirds of trainees complete the program, with the site-specific rates ranging from about 45 to 80 percent, depending on the characteristics of trainees and sites. Young people whose experiences provide data for the paper live in mostly low-income inner-city neighborhoods and participate in the YouthBuild programs of Boston, Massachusetts; San Francisco, California; Gary, Indiana; Cleveland, Ohio; and Tallahassee, Florida. The majority are black males; roughly 10 percent are female and 20 percent are Latino. Only a small percentage are white.

We focus on five developmental tasks. All are continually important, but one tends to be a higher priority for a person at any given time. The following is a list of the tasks in the sequence that they become salient, phrased as they apply specifically to youth in a program such as YouthBuild.[103]

1. ***Trust versus Mistrust***. Learn to trust in the caring, competence, resourcefulness and fairness of YouthBuild staff and in the physical and emotional safety of the program environment among peers.
2. ***Autonomy versus Shame and Doubt***. Negotiate an acceptable range of autonomy in behavior and decision making, learning to respect the program's rules and to value guidance.
3. ***Initiative versus Guilt***. Initiate an honest attempt to collaborate with staff and peers toward self development, learning to cope with or to overcome any survivor's guilt and feelings of rejection by, or isolation from, the old peer group.
4. ***Industry versus Inferiority***. Strive industriously to learn new strategies for living and to master new skills, including skills for employability and skills required for the General Equivalency Diploma, high school diploma or college entrance exams.
5. ***Identity versus Identity Confusion***. Resolve any tensions between old and new beliefs about one's self. Assimilate a focused and positive identity that fosters a healthy life style, internal satisfaction with one's self and a sense of positive expectancy about one's future.

In this logical sequence, the information and social relations developed through each prior task facilitate each subsequent task. Among many important lessons, a few simple propositions emerge as themes:

---

[102] For example, we have used the same basic model to discuss mentoring relationships. See: Ferguson and Snipes, 1994.

[103] Erikson's framework includes eight tasks. So far, our adaptation has considered only the first five.

- "readiness" to exercise self discipline both inside and outside of the program environment seems to be greater among older trainees and appears to be the most fundamental difference between participants who succeed at the above tasks and those who do not;
- traits that distinguish more effective from less effective teachers and counselors in helping youth through the above tasks include respect for youth, skill at responding appropriately when youth test boundaries and great patience;
- at every stage, models and advisors who have successfully broken free from the street life are critically important for some youth who need both advice on how to complete the break and reassurance that they are not "selling out" by making the effort.

This chapter is one among several products of the YouthBuild Demonstration Project of the early 1990s. The project collected both quantitative and qualitative data. The qualitative data include two hundred one-on-one interviews with staff and program participants across two program cycles and five sites. Below, passages from interviews help to illustrate ways that youth experience the various developmental tasks that are the focus of the model that the chapter explicates.

The first section of the chapter introduces distinctions concerning levels of maturity and "conventionality" among trainees at the time that they enter the program. This leads into a discussion of "readiness" for YouthBuild. Then, subsequent sections explain the ways that we have adapted Erikson's framework to analyze YouthBuild, arriving at a version that we distinguish by labeling it the Ferguson/Snipes (FS) model. Again, this model is useful not only for understanding YouthBuild; its broader importance abides in the potential for similar applications in a wide range of institutional settings including schools, work places and civic organizations. The chapter ends by summarizing major themes.

DIFFERENCES AMONG YOUTH

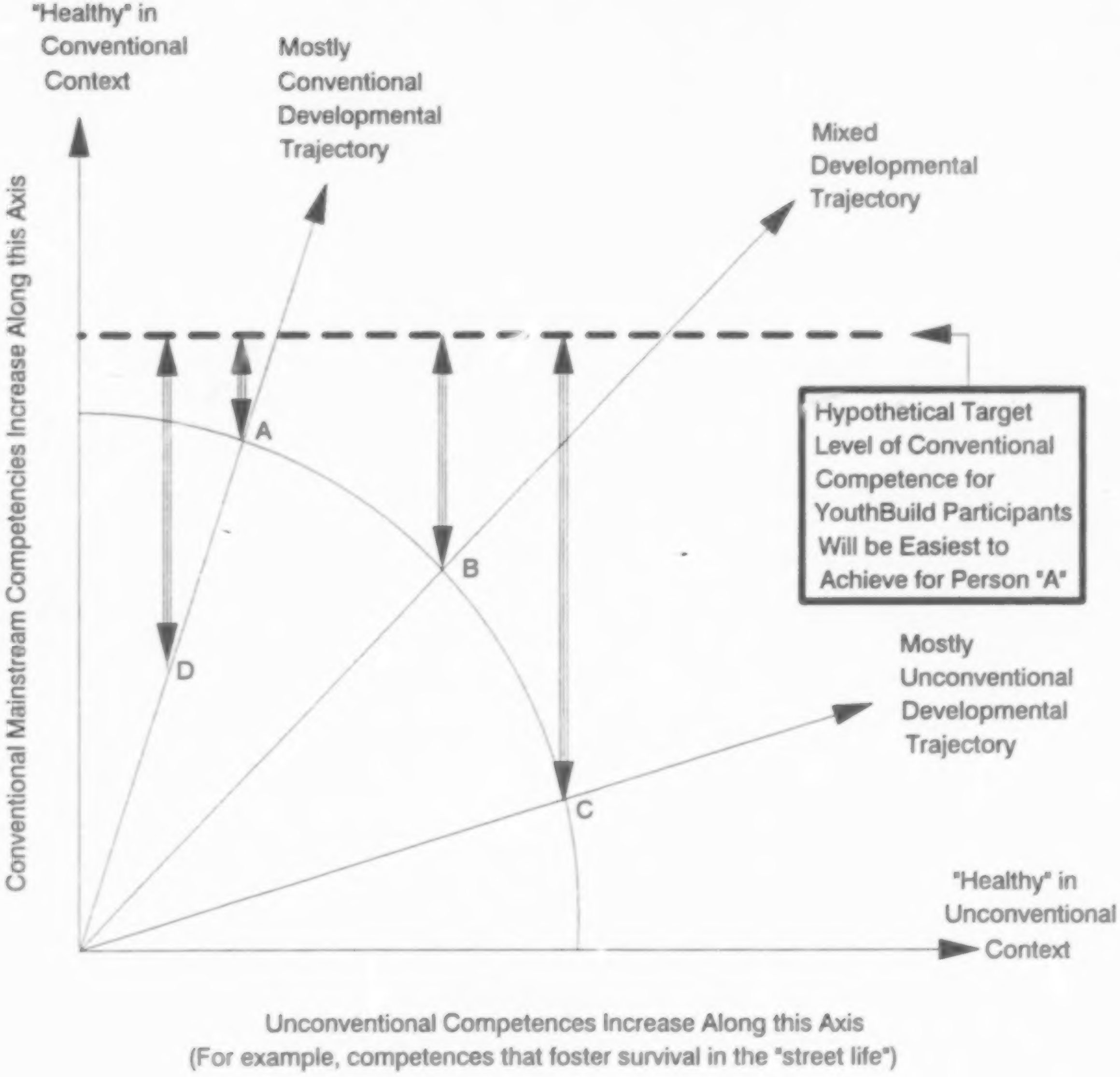
Before beginning a more substantive discussion of what youth experience in YouthBuild, it is important to establish at the outset that participants differ widely in the quality of relationships, knowledge, attitudes, skills, habits and other assets that they have at the time they enter the program. We use the word "competence" to represent assets that reside within the person such as knowledge, attitudes, skills and habits. "Social supports" are the assets that reside within the participant's network of relationships. The important point here is that some youth have competencies and social supports that tend to foster success in YouthBuild and others have competencies and social supports that tend to be impediments. Those whose competencies and social supports are impediments tend to behave in ways that are more "unconventional" by mainstream standards. They face greater challenges in YouthBuild.

Maturity and conventionality are key concepts. Figure 9.1 shows their relationship to one another in our thinking. Youth will develop various levels of maturity in whatever social settings they occupy. In any social setting, achieving "maturity" entails accumulating competencies and social supports that facilitate longevity and success by the standards of that setting. Consider two polar types of settings -- "conventional" and "unconventional" -- defined by mainstream standards. Competencies and social supports that serve well in one may be counter productive in the other.

In figure 9.1, points further from the origin along the horizontal axis represent higher levels of competence of the type that foster healthy survival in unconventional settings. Conversely, the vertical axis applies to conventional settings. Notice the points "A," "B" and "C." Each lies along an arrow that points outward from the origin. Each arrow represents a "developmental trajectory" along which people develop and mature.

FIGURE 9.1

PURSUING CONVENTIONAL PERSONAL GROWTH
from Four Alternative Initial Combinations
of Conventional and Unconventional Competencies


"Healthy" in Conventional Context
Mostly Conventional Developmental Trajectory
Mixed Developmental Trajectory
Conventional Mainstream Competencies Increase Along this Axis
A
B
D
C
Hypothetical Target Level of Conventional Competence for YouthBuild Participants Will be Easiest to Achieve for Person "A"
Mostly Unconventional Developmental Trajectory
"Healthy" in Unconventional Context
Unconventional Competences Increase Along this Axis
(For example, competences that foster survival in the "street life")

Each arrow combines conventional and unconventional competencies in some unique proportion -- consistent hypothetically with some corresponding social context. Points further from the origin along a given arrow represent greater levels of maturity for the contexts where the particular combination of skills is most functional.

Points "A," "B" and "C" also lie along an arc whose distance from the origin is the same at every point. In some "universal" sense, every point on the arc corresponds to one uniform maturity in that each is the same distance from the origin. In this sense, "A," "B" and "C" are equally mature, but have developed differently because they have been in different environments. Point "D" is on the same arrow as "A." The comparison is clear, for example, that point "A" represents greater competence and maturity than point "D." However, comparisons among the other three points produce different rankings, depending upon the context. It is only by the standards of the environment in which "A" exists, that the person at point "C" is clearly less competent than those at points "A" and "D." Nevertheless, for any given target level of *conventional* development in the YouthBuild Program, a person who begins at point "C" has much further to grow. Below, we show how this affects the way he experiences the program.

Through the rest of the chapter, the text refers occasionally to youth of Types A, B and C, from figure 9.1, to indicate contrasts in conventionality. All three may be high school dropouts. However, generally, Type A respects conventional authority and believes firmly that effort and knowledge will be more important than luck in determining the quality of his life. He or she has basic conventional competencies at the ninth grade level or higher, mostly conventional social supports and fairly well defined goals that he believes his participation in the program will serve. Type C may or may not believe that effort can pay off for him in mainstream society, his conventional competencies are quite weak (e.g., below seventh grade level), he has few conventional social supports and his conventional goals are amorphous, at best. Much of his recent life has been "on the streets," including illegal employment and associated social relations. His appearance at the YouthBuild program is the result of a recent and perhaps unstable resolve to change his life. Again, these are prototypes that help to shorten the exposition. Actual youth span a much wider range of combinations.

"READINESS" FOR YOUTHBUILD

We assume in what follows that the conscious or not-so-conscious motivation for most of human behavior, including decisions by some youth to embed themselves in street life, is the desire to experience satisfaction along very basic human motive dimensions. According to motivational psychologists, these motive dimensions include biological impulses to find and experience achievement, influence, affiliation and security.[104] People gravitate to locations and activities -- indeed, they learn skills and imitate practices -- that seem likely to produce these fundamental satisfactions.

However, before someone will focus industriously on a given path to fulfillment, that path needs to seem both feasible and superior to other available alternatives. Feasibility entails knowing some *strategy* (i.e., some set of things to do) and having (or acquiring) the necessary *skills* for implementing the strategy.[105] When a person has a strategy and the skills to implement it and perceives that the potential rewards warrant the effort, he or she is inclined to become "engaged" -- resolutely focused -- toward the goal of reaping those rewards. The reverse is true as well.

---

[104] Motivational psychologists differ in the words that they use and in the number of basic motives that they identify. Most, however, include motives that correspond to those that we list here. See, for example, McClelland, 1987.

[105] The idea that knowing a feasible "strategy" is key to achieving engagement toward a particular goal is emphasized in Skinner, Wellborn and Connell, 1990. Related ideas appear in Ferguson, 1994.

Youth of Type C are typically young people who decide at some point, often based on experience, that school and conventional settings have little to offer in terms, for example, of achievement, influence, affiliation or security. At that time, street life has greater allure. Eventually, most learn that fulfillment on the streets is fleeting and overrated. Street life, they learn, is incompatible with other goals of a more conventional nature that become more salient with age, such as good parenting and staying alive. Learning this lesson may require bouts with drug addiction, time in jail, being shot, seeing friends die and more.

Ultimately, youth reach a time when, correctly or not, they think they are "ready" for alternatives that give them a bridge toward conventional forms of opportunity.[106] Sometimes incarceration and substance abuse programs help youth to achieve this stated of readiness. Others are ready for YouthBuild because their past employment has been menial and dead end. Often they have tried both legal and illegal work and decided that neither can ever be satisfying with their current skill levels.

As discussed in a later section, youth who are not ready when they enter the program often fall by the wayside in the early months. Hence, screening out youth who are not ready (but may be ready later) and selecting youth who are currently ready, is a focus of well-run programs during the period of recruitment and selection. Boston and San Francisco, in particular, put a great deal of effort into screening for trainees who might have troubled backgrounds, but who nevertheless seemed ready. According to the Director in San Francisco:

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

---

[106] It is well-established in the literature on criminology, for example, that young men tend to grow out of criminal behavior as they become young adults. [references]

> We made it clear [just as other sites did] that there'd be no penalty for admission of drug use and no penalty for criminal records. In fact, there might be some benefit in having a criminal record . . . We asked questions designed to tell us about their sincerity, self-awareness, willingness to work with others and their commitment.

Indeed, San Francisco's director was inclined to focus on youth who were more like Type C defined above, as long as they were ready to move in a more conventional direction. These youth, he reasoned, were the least likely to find alternative opportunities.

Officials in Boston, on the other hand, viewed it as too difficult to deal with a preponderance of Type C's. Boston aimed at what might be described as a balanced mix of Type C's, B's and A's. Still, the intent was to not to "cream," but to take young people who truly needed the program and who were ready to "get humble" in expressing their readiness to participate. As a staff member reports it:

> We were looking for people who were really willing to get humble, and put their stuff on the line and really put their hearts up there and say what they really wanted to do. If we could do that in an interview and they could get real and start telling us things, then we felt they were reachable. Versus a couple that came in, they were so hard that you couldn't. The barrier -- you couldn't break the barrier.
>
> We came out of interviews crying. Every night. Young men were saying, "This is my only chance. Please." I mean, they were crying. I was crying. . . . And it was so hard making the decisions. I get water in my eyes just thinking about it. . . . "Why were you acting the way you were before? What do you need to see in your life right now?" And one kid says, "I need a partner like you to care about me." God man, it was just breaking me down.

A young man from the same site reports:

> I just came off and let them know, you know, my details -- where I been through, that I really wanted to learn somethin. I was *ready*. I wasn't ready to fool around no more. I was ready to ... shift in gear and get this thing going, you know? ... That's what it really means to be ready, when you're ready to *give up* whatever you have to give up to get what you want.

Even when youth are supposedly ready, however, competencies from the streets can produce miscalculations. For example, the habit of suspicion may be a survival skill around people who earn their livings through illegal activity, but it can cause an applicant not to be sufficiently open during the YouthBuild interview. Youth who make this mistake may not be admitted to the program. Even if they are admitted, surviving the admissions process is a small hurdle compared to what follows.

Sections that follow address what happens in the program as youth and staff work together, sometimes successfully and sometimes not, through the various stages of relationship building and personal development. Throughout the rest of the chapter, the word "staff" will refer to all program personnel, including executive directors, program managers, instructors and counselors, unless otherwise indicated.

ADAPTING ERIKSON'S FRAMEWORK

Erik Erikson proposes that people face eight distinguishable developmental tasks as they pass through the "Eight Ages of Man," from birth through late adulthood.[107] Each task has an up side and a down side -- a positive and a negative potential. While several tasks may be important at any given time, one will tend to be most salient. This "most salient" task defines the "stage" through which the individual is considered to be passing.

During each stage, a person experiences what Erikson calls "the whole critical alternative" between positive and negative outlooks or "senses" regarding himself and his relationship to the social context. If the developmental task associated with a particular stage is not resolved positively, then negative or ambivalent irresolution has detrimental consequences for later stages. Hence, healthy human development at every stage in life depends upon healthy resolution of challenges associated with earlier developmental tasks.

---

[107] See, Erikson, 1963. The eight "ages" are: Trust versus Mistrust (Infancy); Autonomy versus Doubt and Shame (Early Childhood); Initiative versus Guilt (Pre-School Childhood); Industry versus Inferiority (School Age); Identity versus Identity Confusion (Adolescence); Intimacy versus Isolation (Late Adolescence and Early Adulthood); Generativity versus Stagnation (Middle Adulthood); and Integrity versus Despair (Middle to Late Adulthood).

YouthBuild offers a moratorium during which young people with unresolved issues from earlier stages in life can revisit them. Resolution, if it ever occurred at all, is never permanent. People repeatedly revisit tasks as they move through life because events call previous resolutions into question or, more often, render them incomplete. The Ferguson/Snipes (FS) model makes explicit the process by which people revisit the tasks in Erikson's model each time that they encounter a new social context -- a school, a program, a job or any other environment -- where, over time, they must rely upon others to help them in the process of personal development.[108]

Figure 9.2 summarizes the tasks and stages in the FS model.[109] We refer back to it repeatedly in what follows. Each row represents a stage; each introduces a new task that was not salient in the prior stage. Each column represents a task; consecutive rows of each column show the evolution of each task as the youth moves to later stages. While the process applies to every youth who participates in YouthBuild, each will experience it in a unique way for reasons introduced above in defining types A, B and C.

Each section below opens with a statement of how that task in the FS framework relates to the task of the same name in Erikson's work. Then, each section addresses some of the major issues that young people face in YouthBuild, using the FS model to structure the presentation.

---

[108] This paper focuses on the experience of youth. The same basic framework might alternatively be used to understand the experience of staff members. They, too, must confront the social environment of the program and find ways to experience personal development in this context.

[109] For another analysis that outlines stages in working with youth see: Fox, 1985. The stages that Fox identifies from his experience working with urban gangs are remarkably similar to those that we address here.

FIGURE 9.2

STAGES IN A YOUTH'S DEVELOPMENT IN THE YOUTHBUILD PROGRAM

AND ASSOCIATED DEVELOPMENTAL TASKS AS THE YOUTH PROGRESSES

Each Stage Builds Upon Old Tasks and Introduces a New Task

TASKS →

STAGES ↓

I	Feel an Initial Sense of Trust and Comfort				
II	Trust Becomes Codified, Deeper and Differentiated	Negotiate Balance of Autonomy vs. Staff Authority			
III	Trusted People Relied Upon for Advice Concerning a New Life Direction	Autonomy Expressed Within the Appropriate Range	Initiate Real Attempt to Collaborate Toward Self Development		
IV	Trusted Teachers and Advisors Give Support and Reassurance as Trainee Expresses More Industriousness	Trainees Can Be Trusted to Expand the Initial Range of Permitted Autonomy	Specific Goals for Self Development (Skills and Orientations) Guide Actions	Strive Toward Competence, Integrate Skills, & Build Belief in Capacity for Mastery	
V	Trusted Advisors Positively Affirm the Trainee's New Identity	Autonomy Controls No Longer Necessary	Identify Self with the New Skills and Orientations	Identify Self as Competent to Use Skills & Learn More	Achieve Integration of Identity Components

NEW DEVELOPMENTAL TASK:

Stages
- I. Trust vs. Mistrust
- II. Autonomy vs. Shame & Doubt
- III. Initiative vs. Guilt
- IV. Industry vs. Inferiority
- V. Identity vs. Identity Confusion

Adapted by R. Ferguson and J. Snipes from work on identity by E. Erikson.

STAGE ONE: Trust versus Mistrust

The earliest task in Erikson's model is to resolve the conflict "trust versus mistrust" that gives the first stage its name. Concentrated during infancy, positive resolution of this conflict depends heavily on development of a strong maternal bond though which the child develops a "sense" that care and love are shared reciprocally between human beings. In addition, s/he learns that loved ones are dependable. "The infant's first social achievement, then, is his willingness to let the mother out of sight without undue anxiety or rage, because she has become an inner certainty as well as an outer predictability."(Erikson, p. 247) Conversely, infants who fail to experience consistency and continuity from their earliest care givers are at risk for developing a propensity to feel insecure -- a sense of mistrust. The trust that develops at this stage is a sense of security -- not an articulated belief.

In the FS model for YouthBuild, "Trust versus Mistrust" is the first "critical alternative" that the trainee faces as he or she encounters the program. It begins at the first contact and may be unresolved for the first few days or weeks after the program begins. Many youth at this stage are quite passive -- they observe and experience the program but make little if any effort to test or to influence it. "Am I safe here? Do I like this? Are these people honest? Should I stay?" are questions that youth may ask themselves. The challenge is to achieve a sense of comfort and positive expectancy. Passages below emphasize that establishing expectations of physical and emotional safety are key. Early demonstrations of the staff's effective problem-solving abilities are important as well. Perhaps most important, youth look for signals that YouthBuild is not like other institutions, particularly schools, that have been disappointing in the past. Trainees continually update their initial impressions over the opening days and weeks of the program.

Orientation

Each site conducts an orientation program at the beginning. Typically, orientation lasts between four days and two weeks. Generally, any unexcused absence during orientation results in automatic expulsion from the program. When designed well, orientation activities pay careful attention to breaking down barriers that might exist by neighborhood origin, ethnicity or gender. They are very effective at beginning to build the atmosphere that programs call "family." Activities as simple as tossing a ball around a circle and calling out the name of the person to whom you are tossing the ball are surprising in their effectiveness at raising the level of interpersonal comfort.

Additional activities engage trainees in discussions of topics that require them to be introspective and help them to understand better the reasons that YouthBuild is where they need to be at this time in their lives. In addition to reviewing the types of mistakes that people make to send their lives off course, staff help trainees to understand the roles of race, social class and misguided attitudes that adults hold about children, in contributing to their past experiences. Both youth and staff talk personally about themselves in small groups and with the program as a whole. By the end of orientation, youth have an initial familiarity with one another and with the staff. In addition, they understand better their own reasons for being in the program and what they can expect over the coming months if they do their parts.

It is also during this period that youth become familiar with the contract that defines the program's rules, including what the staff expect of them and what they should expect from the staff. At some sites, each youth and each staff member signs the contract. Over the first few months, it is likely that youth will challenge the contract and, in some cases, participate with the staff and director in revising it.

Is YouthBuild "For Real?"

Among the more important achievements of an effective orientation is that, by the end, the trainees have learned to believe that YouthBuild is "for real." Most say that teachers in regular school seldom really cared whether they learned. Interview after interview in all five cities of the demonstration project told the same story: students report that with a few notable exceptions, teachers in regular school gave them scant encouragement, had little or no patience, gave almost no individualized attention, communicated no joy of learning and delivered lessons that were unstimulating. Commonly, youth report, teachers assigned work that students did not know how to do and moved rapidly through lesson plans without regard to whether the class understood the lessons.[110]

The following are representative statements, one from each site.

> Trainee #1: In high school they don't care. They just want to get paid.
>
> Trainee #2: Well, the teachers don't really care if you learn or not, at the school I went to anyway.
>
> Trainee #3: In English class it was like, you read a story and then you answer the questions afterwards. That's it. That was it. ... Didn't really teach you anything.
>
> Trainee #4: And people get up, walk out of class. If you don't feel like being in it then don't go there. He doesn't really care. He never really cared.
>
> Trainee #5: I mean teachers in high school ... they're there to get a paycheck, you

---

[110] It is important to remember here that these youth are high school dropouts. They are likely to come from the lowest academic tracks and to be the students from whom teachers expect the least. Hence, their experiences will be worse than for the average student in the same schools. For a review of relevant literature that includes several citations on the negative effects of ability tracking, see: National Research Council, 1993. Chapter 7. For an analysis that compares the experience and perspectives of three youth in an urban youth high school, one of whom is academically "disaffected," see: Crichlow, 1992.

> know what I'm saying. Then they'll pick a student that they like. It will be more a social thing they doing instead of an actual job.

As detailed in later sections below, most reports about teachers in YouthBuild are the polar opposites of the examples above. While teachers in YouthBuild are not saints, the following sentiment from an instructor at one of the demonstration sites is typical.

> I think that's probably the secret to my success, that I'm able to identify, to relate, to have the patience to deal with them on a daily basis, and they're not used to that. ... To hang in there, and to come back after you have a bad day, to come back with just as much energy as when you left, and continue on. A lot of them are used to people giving up on them, hence they give up on themselves.

Further, openness about themselves is a sign that teachers in YouthBuild seek not to maintain the alienating social distance that many teachers in regular school kept. Uniformly across the sites, students in YouthBuild expect teachers not only to give full disclosure about themselves, but also to relate to students like "family," not professional service providers.

Early Problem Solving

The "family" ambiance grows rapidly when staff members help with problems that appear to be above and beyond their formal responsibilities. Examples accumulate through the early weeks of the program as staff help trainees to organize their lives logistically for participation in the program. Knowing that this assistance is available fosters a sense of security among trainees. Staff and trainees alike begin using the word "family" to describe the environment. The particular events that drive this process arise from the natural rhythms of life in and around the program and are never the same twice. While circumstances vary, the constant is the staff's preparedness to do pretty much whatever is needed to help trainees get a smooth start in the program.

This example is from Gary:

> Staff Member: When 97 percent of these guys walked through the door, this staff became everything, Mamma, Daddy, uncle, best friend, cousin, whatever.
>
> Interviewer: How fast did that happen?
>
> Staff Member: End of the first week of orientation. That Thursday, in fact, one of the trainees had a brother die. He was about three months old. The family knew nothing about putting together a funeral. Making arrangements, who to call, where to get flowers, any of that. Ms. Best and I and the other teacher got together and made telephone calls. Ms. Brooks got involved, you know. And we helped the family make arrangements, I mean you would have thought that it was our family that had a death.
>
> And from there, everything just busted open. It's like the trainees thought, "Well if they can do that for him, I've got a problem here and there and I need help, you know." And it really became, it became a family -- I mean, it became a family.

Similar attitudes existed at other sites.

One young woman in the San Francisco program had financial trouble as the program began and could not pay her rent:

> Trainee: YouthBuild paid my rent a couple of months.... 'Cause I started working [i.e., enrolled at YouthBuild] and I reported it to my social worker. And my social worker cut my check a lot. She was makin' a mistake, 'cause she was sayin I was makin' too much money, and I wasn't, and I wasn't able to pay my rent. And I told [the counselor] about it, and then ... [the director] was across the street eatin' I remember. And we walked over there, and [the director] was like, "We'll pay her rent for the next couple of months." I was like "Ooh! Okay!"
>
> Interviewer: So that surprised you?
>
> Trainee: *Yeah*, that surprised me to *death*! And [the director] is always comin out the pocket though. With his own money. He *always*, all the time. He -- I think God sent me to YouthBuild, to tell you the truth.

Events such as these are powerful experiences for trainees. Outside of YouthBuild, trainees often lack bonds with adults who have the wisdom and resources to solve problems. The contrast can be stark. As unsolicited evidence of caring and effectiveness accumulates, trust grows and youth become more confident that YouthBuild is where they belong. This process can also work in reverse. Signs of indifference, disdain or an overly punitive program culture may lead youth to feel that staff do not deserve their trust and respect. Negative signs in one-on-one relationships between youth and staff include failure to make eye contact, failure to listen or trainee misinterpretations of early disciplinary actions. The latter can be particularly harmful for Type C trainees (i.e., more unconventional, as defined above), because it confirms their negative expectations.

Expectations of physical and emotional safety and knowledge that staff members are available to help with logistical problems can develop rapidly during the first week or two of the program when becoming comfortable is the major task. During these first few weeks, trainees tend to be on their best behaviors. However, a period of more variable behavior follows. We turn now to that period.

STAGE TWO: Autonomy versus Shame and Doubt

The second major task in Erikson's life-cycle model is called "autonomy versus shame and doubt." It is salient in early childhood. The child at this stage has, as Erikson writes, "... a sudden violent wish to have a choice."(Erikson, p. 252) However, as he exerts his relatively untamed will, he may experience shame and doubt. Shame is embarrassment -- the feeling that one wants to shrink from the judgmental view of those who would condemn his behaviors. Doubt is troubling uncertainty, especially regarding the possibility of good outcomes. To avoid habitual and routine feelings of shame and doubt, children need to sense a balance between their autonomy and external controls. As Erikson writes, "From a sense of self-control without loss of self-esteem comes a lasting sense of good will and pride; from a sense of loss of self-control and of foreign over-control comes a lasting propensity for doubt and shame."(Erikson, p. 254) Children who come successfully through this stage sense that they should respect rules and expect fairness and justice from people in positions of authority.

The second stage in the FS model is also labeled "autonomy versus shame and doubt." The task in YouthBuild is to achieve a balance between the authority of the staff and the rules of the organization, versus the will of the program participant to do as he wishes. This stage corresponds to the second row of figure 9.2, both columns. The consensus of staff members at a meeting for YouthBuild Boston was that stable resolution of this stage may take up to five months. Youth during this stage will test the program in order to discover where the real boundaries lay. Some will act out or purposefully break the rules, others will simply ask questions. Shame may be the result when participants misbehave sufficiently that they, on reflection, are embarrassed by their own actions. Doubt results when youth test themselves or the staff in ways that produce evidence calling into question whether the youth have the ability to succeed in the program.

The second stage also includes a continuation of trust building. It augments the initial work of the "trust versus mistrust" stage. Trust becomes deeper and more differentiated. Implicitly and explicitly, youth ask what we call "the four trust questions" about each staff member and about the program more generally: 1. Can I trust these people to care about me? 2. Can I trust these people to be competent -- to know what they are talking about? 3. Can I trust these people to be resourceful and dependable enough to keep their promises? and 4. Can I trust that these people will be pleasant to work with -- that they will respect me and be fair? If the answers are generally affirmative and if youth find the appropriate balance between asserting their personal autonomy and respecting the external controls of the program, then this second stage achieves a positive resolution. Implicitly, youth are saying to staff, "I will yield some control over my autonomy if you will prove to me that I can trust you." As this stage begins, some staff may seem deserving, and some may not.

We say that the first two stages, "trust versus mistrust" and "autonomy versus shame and doubt," comprise a period of increasing "social engagement." To "engage" something is to become involved with it in a focused way. During these first two stages, youth are focused primarily upon becoming enmeshed in the social relations of the program and less on achieving more instrumental goals.

Scheming to "Get Over" versus to "Get Ahead"

It is not unusual during the first several months for trainees to have difficulty conforming their behavior to the requirements of the program. The difficulty is multidimensional. First, the more unconventional their life styles have been, the more habits they have that are at odds with what the program requires. Second, many of the same trainees have difficulty allowing others to define the terms of agreements; they resist ultimatums from authority figures. Trainees who represent the worst cases of this are not "ready" for YouthBuild. When they are identified during the admissions process, they are not admitted. If they get through the admissions screen, they either change or they fall by the wayside.

The first example below concerns a participant who missed a day of the program and then refused to tell the truth about the reason. The trainee told the staff and students that he was in jail that day. However, some of his peers had seen him leaving a liquor store. The program manager wrote up a contract concerning his future behavior and he refused to sign it. The program manager tells the story:

> . . .and then when we gave him an ultimatum to sign this contract, he refused to sign the contract. And so we...said "Well, look, I don't think there's much more we can do for you here." When I asked him to leave, his peers came to me and said "Wait a minute, why are you doing that to him." . . . He always had conditions

> on how to work with him. You could only work with him under certain conditions. Like, "We can talk about my case, but we can't do it in private"... But when it was time to get the students on his side, he didn't want to put his stuff out on the floor. I said, "Look, I'll only deal with you if we put you out on the table, just as you are." So the reality of what happened was when we did throw it on the table, I knew he was guilty. But it was almost more important to let them [i.e., the other students] know that too. ...
>
> If he'd have understood what it was to be humble. Because at that point, they [other students] asked, "Well, if he comes back and apologizes, can he come back?" I think I even said, "Yeah." But he couldn't do it... Here's a person who probably spent -- and this is something I want all y'all [the trainees in the room] to really think about -- he spent more time trying to figure out how to get *over* than trying to get *ahead*. And that's probably one of the characteristics of a lot of times some young people. They will spend more time trying to get *over* than trying to get ahead, when it doesn't take as much effort to just get ahead. 'Cause you sit there and scheme and you plan, you think, and you figure, "How am I gonna do this? What am I gonna tell them?" when all you gotta do is just do it, just do it right the first time, and you're finished.

The interviewer asks, "Does that make sense to the trainees?" A trainee

answers:

> Yeah it does, but you gotta look at it. When you start out, though, most of us, man, that's all we started with was scheming. So you can't just expect to flip the coin, man, and, you know, in that short of an amount of time, and expect somebody to change like that. It's not like that. Speaking for myself, 'cause, you know, scheming, that's how I went through just about everything I did, *and* did it in YouthBuild...
>
> Interviewer: You *still* do that?
>
> Trainee: No, not as much.
>
> Interviewer: Well why don't you, and when did you stop?
>
> Trainee: Um, I stopped scheming as much when I started getting close to my partner down there at the end, [the construction manager]. 'Cause I just didn't understand why they kept tryin to help me... Something was wrong... I'm like, "Why are these people wantin to help me?" You know what I'm sayin? "Let me just *do* this." You know? "I know what I'm doin." But when it finally sank in...that's when I started spending less time on trying to get over, and just [saying], "Hey, alright, I don't know what I'm doing. Show me." And things've been pickin up for me ever since.

This example illustrates the contrast between successful and unsuccessful resolution of the autonomy stage. The trainee who lied about the reason for his absence chose to leave the program rather than sign a behavioral contract with the program manager. This was a failure of the trainee and the staff to negotiate a range of control that was broad enough to be tolerable for the student, yet narrow enough to support the trainee's progress. The trainee's termination from the program was the result.

On the other hand, the trainee who spoke of "scheming" shows the importance of trusting relationships between trainees and staff members. He stopped scheming because he came to trust in the almost unconditional support of staff members who seemed determined to help him. He decided to admit his ignorance and to place himself under their guidance. His case provides a good example of the way that resolution of autonomy issues depends on the resolution of trust issues.

Discipline is a Balancing Act

As discussed earlier, trainees tend to be on their best behavior for the one or two weeks of orientation. Afterward, the testing that trainees do for the next few months requires a balancing act from the staff (including the director and program manager). Staff need to be firm enough to maintain control of the program, but not so firm as to seem oppressive. They need to be flexible, but not so flexible as to seem vulnerable.

The YouthBuild Demonstration Project produced examples of staff who were too overbearing and others who were too meek. For example, a particular instructor who taught basic skills was ineffective in the early months because he was unable to command respect and had little control over his classroom. When asked why they "dogged" the instructor a group answered, "Because we can." Autonomy issues in this man's classroom were not moving toward an acceptable resolution. Eventually, the director responded to the problem by moving one of the counselors into the classroom to share the teaching duties. The role of the original instructor diminished and he was not rehired the next year.

At the opposite extreme, a staff member at another site quickly earned a reputation among trainees for being "too hard on people." A trainee who was one of her defenders says,

> Yeah, she's hard but she has to be. Most fellas in here, they come off the streets and they ain't used to somebody telling them what do. They not going to do it if you don't tell them so you know, you got to constantly stay on them about doing something. So, it's more or less where she stands, it's like a mother. Your mother's always telling you to go ahead and do this, do that but you just lazy. And then, you feel she's just being mean or just telling, you know. That's all it is..."

However, the story is not so simple.

The following passage recounts an event during which she was disrespectful to a trainee and he was disrespectful in return. It shows that resolution of autonomy issues sometimes requires more self-discipline from staff in addition to trainees. Both the teacher and the student probably experienced the down side of "autonomy versus shame and doubt": both were probably ashamed of their behaviors and both probably had some doubts about whether they could continue working together. As the trainee tells the story,

> [She] was in a bad mood, and...she gave us some work that didn't nobody know nothin about. So, I asked her, I said, well, I asked what was the purpose for this. She cursed at me. She was like, "'Ain't none of your damn business what the purpose is." You know, she was like, "Just do it. Don't ask questions." So. . .I said, "You ain't my mamma. Don't be cursin at me. What you think this is?" And she was like, "I'm a grown woman, you don't talk to me like that." I said, "I don't give a damn *who* you *are*, you don't talk to *me* like that." So we just went back and forth, back and forth. So then she stood up. I said, "What you standin your big ass up for, like you fittin to *do* somethin?'" She walked on out of the room. . . . [Later], we -- she apologized and everything and I apologized, so we got back cool and everything.

Both he and the teacher behaved improperly and both acknowledged soon afterward that a different standard of behavior was warranted. Both say that they learned a lesson -- resolved some autonomy issues -- that helped them to work together more effectively for the rest of the program.

Generally, because of sexism by male participants, females on the staff face greater challenges earning respect than most males. Especially during their first few months on the job, some female staffers adopt overly gruff demeanors in reaction to actual or expected disrespect from male youth. They eventually "mellow out," but not without working with trainees to find a mutually acceptable way of relating to one another.

The discussion above concerns the stage called "autonomy versus shame and doubt," represented by the second line of figure 9.2. The central task of this stage is resolved when trainees and staff together find an appropriate balance between the trainee's exercise of discretion and the program's imposition of structure and control. Trainees will not continue to allow this external control if they do not trust that the staff are caring, competent, honest about their ability to deliver what they promise, fair and respectful. When "doubt" concerning potential working relationships or "shame" from inappropriate behavior raise tensions, positive resolutions can allow progress to continue. However, patently negative resolutions (e.g., the young man who refused to sign the contract) typically leads trainees to quit the program or to be dismissed.

The next section concerns the third line of figure 9.2. Tasks associated with the first two stages remain foundational and continue to evolve, but a different task takes center stage.

STAGE THREE: Initiative versus Guilt

The third task in Erikson's life cycle framework is called "initiative versus guilt." This stage when task is most salient occurs during the pre-school years. Erikson writes, "Initiative adds to autonomy the quality of undertaking, planning and 'attacking' a task for the sake of being active and on move."(Erikson, p. 255) While this is generally normal and healthy, the danger at this stage is that the child will develop a sense of guilt over the goals that he contemplates or the actions that he takes. Guilt for a small child might come from purposely harming or planning to harm a sibling or parent or from seeking to gain an unfair or immoral advantage. The idea or the act offends his own sense of right and wrong. While shame, associated with the previous stage, is the desire to hide from external disapproval, guilt is the product of conscience. With guilt, the disapproval is internal. Both shame and guilt can retard healthy development. The successful child in this stage finds ways of taking initiative that do not result routinely in pangs of guilt.

The stage of "initiative versus guilt" in YouthBuild, using the FS model, concerns initiation in earnest of the search for personal development in the context of the program. Before this stage, trainees were focused on fitting in socially, on learning the strengths and weakness of the staff and their peers, and on determining which rules were real. As one program manager put it, many trainees during the early stages are focused on "getting over" rather than on "getting ahead." "Initiative versus guilt" is the stage when trust and autonomy are sufficiently well established that "getting ahead" can become the more salient concern.

Guilt, often "survivor's guilt," is the down side. It comes, for example, from contemplating goals or taking actions that seem to betray or to abandon friends, family and social class affiliations. Youth wonder whether it is fair for them to have such aspirations or to reap the benefits of a program that brothers, sisters and friends may deserve as much as they do. If the first two stages of the youth's development have reached positive resolutions, staff and peers in the program are available to help the trainee to resolve this guilt. Positive resolution of this stage comes when the participant finds and adopts aspirations and behaviors that do not provoke pangs of conscience and ambivalence. Often, the challenge is to find strong ethical justifications for the goals under consideration and ways of interpreting personal progress as being in the best interest of loved ones.

At this stage the trainee begins to rely honestly on members of the staff to provide advice, assistance and reassurance. Questions are more often serious -- no longer intended to test the staff's competence. The youth at this stage in the program believe the program is a reliable vehicle and now they really wants it to help them to go somewhere. Their most salient questions to themselves and to the staff become, "What should I do with this opportunity and with my life?" and "Am I 'selling out' by wanting to rise up in the world?"

Violating Norms

Prior to YouthBuild, the trainee lived by a set of norms and values that he or she internalized, at least partially, as legitimate. These norms may have included such rules as, "You don't abandon your friends," and "You don't 'sell out' by aspiring to emulate people who look down on your kind." These are familiar themes from the work of anthropologists like John Ogbu who write of "oppositional cultures" among socially marginalized groups.[111] Even in the inner city, however, youth vary in the degree to which their identities are oppositional to mainstream society. For example, trainees like Type A from figure 9.1 may have less ambivalence because their friends are already quite conventional in their orientations. Type A may not feel as put down by mainstream society. Especially within his or her own race, people from mainstream society have probably been more accepting of him or her than of Type C and he or she has probably already developed an identification with them.

---

[111] See, for example, Ogbu, 1978.

Conversely, youth of Type C may have developed an oppositional identity that regards mainstream society as the source of false promises and the sanctuary of people who feel superior because they assume that s/he is inferior. (Recall the discussion of public school teachers' attitudes, above.) Type C has skills and social supports that, by and large, do not fit well with mainstream society. For a young person who is more like Type C, success in mainstream society may seem to require abandoning or betraying the friends and values that gave his or her life structure and legitimacy.

Resulting feelings of confusion and guilt can retard initiative. Therefore, among the most critical challenges for trainees at this stage is to understand their involvement with previous life styles, relationships, and values in terms that free them to continue making progress toward mainstream success without feeling guilty. *Finding conventional goals that have moral legitimacy and finding moral legitimacy in conventional goals is the major work of this stage.*

The leadership component of the YouthBuild program was not motivated initially to help youth overcome guilt. Nevertheless, it can help to serve this purpose. The idea that one will "take responsibility for making things go right" for family, friends and community can give moral legitimacy to efforts at personal development that give one the ability to serve. Ideally, the trainee learns to see his new relationship to his family, community, old peers and old values as one that is both righteous and positive. Some old peers and some old values must be dropped, but only because they stand in the way of a greater good.

In the process of stepping off in a new direction, trainees may also face up to the immorality of old behaviors, since they no longer have a stake in rationalizing the continuation of those behaviors. Interestingly, trainees often refuse to assert that old behaviors are immoral for friends who are still on the street. They often say, "People gotta do what they gotta do," or "What they do is their business." However, the old behaviors are immoral *now for themselves* because YouthBuild presents alternative opportunities that are morally superior. As one young man expresses it,

> Trainee: Yeah, I got friends like that, but see, we talk on the status now. They only can come at me for some positive knowledge, you know what I'm saying. Whatever you want to do, that's your business . . .
>
> Interviewer: So, do people come at you and say, we want to do X, Y and Z, do you just ignore them, do you tell them not to come at you with that?
>
> Trainee: No, I just be like, man, I'm chillin'. I come at them from the hood, I'm still from the hood. *I ain't never going to sell out or nothing*. We still on the same status, you know. I just let 'em know that right now, that's the least thing on my mind.

Taking Positive Initiative without "Selling Out"

Staff members at one site took trainees out to eat at a Chinese restaurant. One of the staff called their attention to the way that the waiters shifted back and forth between Chinese and English. Then he asked the trainees if this shifting back and forth meant that they were "selling out." He used this as the starting point for a discussion of what it means to "sell out."

The person who gave us this example reported that the discussion was very helpful. Trainees were able to draw upon the staff and upon one another for help in understanding that mainstream success does not require betraying or abandoning what is positive in one's base culture. Indeed, they learned that acquiring bilingual and bi-cultural skills can be an instrumental strategy. It positions one to serve one's home community more effectively by drawing on outside resources.

Discussions of such issues take place at all of the sites through the entire program cycle. These discussions are very important because so many trainees have friends who try to make them feel guilty for making the effort to change and stupid for believing that YouthBuild is not just one more dead end.

Fortunately, young men usually report that their friends become supportive when told that the social relations in YouthBuild are not disrespectful, as on many low-wage jobs, and that the trainee is learning skills that will qualify him for higher-paying jobs. Participants seldom admit in interviews that harassment from peers makes them reconsider *their own* participation in the program. At the same time, they speculate that *other* trainees are not so strong and do allow the negative peer pressure to affect their commitment to the program.

> Interviewer: I was talking to you about this before and you said maybe they're just scared of success. I honestly don't understand what's scary about success.
>
> Trainee: I got a perfect, good example. I received a plaque for perfect attendance. And just yesterday, my brother and his friend came over, right? Okay, and then, you know, he started talking about my reward, he started dissing me, you know.
>
> Interviewer: Like you were a goody-goody or something?
>
> Trainee: I mean, he just started dissing me like, you know, like, like this ain't nothing, you know.
>
> Interviewer. How did that make you feel?
>
> Trainee: I mean, for me, it doesn't make me feel no way because, you know, I can stand on my own, you know, which a lot of these guys, you know, they not at that stage where, you know, they could just look over it, you know, and do what they want to do. I mean, a lot of them might want to, you know, go to school [i.e., YouthBuild] but, you know, they scared of what their friends going to say, you know. . . .
>
> I mean, for me, you know, one of the things for me is, you know, seeing the guys

> that were staying in the program going off to school, staying in school. ... Yeah, coming home for their break, you know, telling me, you know, how school is and, you know, you know, it's fun and stuff like that. And the guys that got jobs, you know, that have actually, you know, stayed in their jobs, I mean stuff like that motivates me. I mean, so, it don't matter what nobody say, you know.

In still another example, from another trainee:

> Interviewer: So, how did your boys react to you being in YouthBuild?
>
> Trainee: Some of them were glad for me, that I was trying to do something. Whereas, others, they were like, "Oh man, what you doing, fucking with that pussy shit?"
>
> Interviewer: So, they were trying to say that you're a sucker or whatever?
>
> Trainee: Yeah, you coppin' out man. And I really didn't even care what they said, whether they liked it or not.... I was like, to each his own, that's all. It ain't none of your business what I do anyway.

Females report that their friends are more stubbornly unsupportive than is true for males. Moreover, because females are a small minority in the program, they have fewer friends of the same sex in the program to replace those on the outside from whom they might drift apart. The following young woman faced many challenges. Note the role of religion and moral legitimacy in the rationale for her determination to succeed.

> Interviewer: What do you think makes the difference between [old friends] and you?
>
> Trainee: And I don't think I'm better than them or nothin. I know they be sayin that. I don't know what the difference is. ... I used to even steal clothes out of Macy's, steal jeans and stuff like that, but I just grew out of that. And plus church is another thing that helped change me. I'm religious. Stealin is not the way to go. I won't have it before I'll steal it...
>
> I don't want a "TV" life. All my friends be like, "You want a TV life," cause we always talk. I be like "I don't want a TV life, I just want a house, a nice car, two car garage, my daughter to come home from school and be able to bring her friends to a decent place, and -- I want to cook dinner and see my daughter doin her homework and -- you know?
>
> Interviewer: Why do you think they call that a "TV" life?
>
> Trainee: ...Because they so used to, because we all grew up differently.

> We didn't grow up -- only time we saw somethin like that was *on* TV. We didn't see it in our own homes, so they call it "TV" life. But to me that's reality, and that's how I'm gonna be. That's not "TV" life, that's how I'm gonna be.

In this example, we can see the role that a new moral stance plays in her decision to continue to engage the program and have a regular, legal job. Indeed, in addition to saying that she has "grown out" of stealing, she rejects the idea for religious reasons. Though not covered in this passage, we know from interviews that she, like others, received a great deal of support and encouragement from the YouthBuild staff in stabilizing herself on this new life trajectory.

Survivor's Guilt

The following example shows the way that feelings of guilt associated with allegiance toward a peer group that remains on the street can motivate young people to take actions that completely sabotage their progress. The young man in the first example below was a high school graduate who matriculated to a freshman year in college but allowed survivor's guilt to get him in trouble. He spent a year behind bars for illegal possession of stolen guns that he intended to take home for defensive use by his friends on the street. Eventually, he landed in YouthBuild. His example shows that some young people need more constructive and conventional ways of helping their friends who remain in the street life, or ways to rationalize leaving them alone. His comments below indicate that guilt remained a problem for him quite late into the YouthBuild program cycle. He had been a delegate to a national meeting in Washington DC. The interviewer asked him, "What was that like?" He answered:

> It was -- I don't know -- it was alright, I guess. It's just some of the attitudes that, you know, YouthBuild USA, like the ideas that they have is like, you know, just wacked. I mean, they look at it like everything is just so

> fine and dandy. ... They act like, you know, people out on the streets, like they aren't there, you know. As far as you know, you got boys out in the neighborhood but they want you to just pick up and you know and forget about them and do what you gotta do, which is fine but you always -- you know, you grew up with them. You can't just leave them behind.

Other youth had similar concerns for the safety and welfare of their friends. For example, the following young man not only was worried about his friends, the problem was compounded because he received no support from his mother in dealing with the transition he was attempting to make through YouthBuild:

> Interviewer: What situations are still hard for you to deal with?
>
> Trainee: To be truthful, when I go home like when I go to my mama and she still saying I will never go right. Also when I go to my mother's house and like I see about three or four of my homies and they'll say something like, "Yeah, C." 'Cause that's my nickname, C. "You know it's only four of us left man, everybody else in jail or dead. Why don't you hang with your homies, man." I'll be like, "No." I'll kick it with them for about half hour, maybe an hour, chopping up, reminiscing and then I buff. And they make me feel bad when I leave. 'Cause I'm used to be hanging twenty-four hours a day right there. Plus then I'll be like, I hope none of them get killed. 'Cause if they do I'm going to be feeling like shit that I wasn't around, shit like that. That's one of the hardest [things to deal with], man. And seeing dope-fiend homies. Homies that used to be straight, no drugs, basketball players. And now that I come back to my old route they on crack rock. That make me feel tough, man that's real.

We do not know how important difficulty breaking away from friends was among youth who dropped out of the program. Most who remained in the program report that they gradually drifted away from spending time with their friends on the street because of the impracticality of hanging out at night and being to work at YouthBuild on time in the morning. They would say, "We're still friends, but I just don't see them much anymore." Youth who tried to be at YouthBuild during the day and on the streets at night ultimately had to make a choice:

> A lot of people wasn't ready to . . . leave hangin out with the fellas, or runnin, and then thinkin they could come here and be successful. Hangin out all night and comin in here at eight o'clock in mornin, it's not gonna make it, 'cause I did it myself. . . It didn't work for me.

The examples demonstrate that at least some trainees who have left friends on the street struggle with survivor's guilt and with the feeling that they are selling out. Since they may receive little positive social support outside the program -- recall the mother in the passage above -- they need support from the staff and from peers in the program in order to cope with the ramifications of the changes they are trying to make. Unfortunately, the more based in street life the trainee's recent past has been, the fewer people on the staff have the skills and background to establish the common ground necessary for the trainee to be open to their help. Recall, for example, the young man who asserted, "Without that [experience] you can't tell me jack shit." People with more similar experiences simply have more credibility. Findings from the statistical analysis in chapter 8 show that the likelihood of completing the program was lower for youth who had more unconventional life styles during the months immediately preceding the program. The material above helps to explain why.

Youth who positively resolve the struggles detailed above find it easier to concentrate on setting goals and to begin pursuing those goals in earnest. The staff at YouthBuild programs have various ways of exposing students to career options that they can adopt as goals and helping them to identify options that fit their interests. Some staff are quite effective in this regard, others are not.

The most effective staff members motivate youth to become deeply engaged in acquiring the knowledge that their chosen goals will require. This is the subject of the next section.

STAGE FOUR: Industry versus Inferiority

"Industry versus inferiority" is the task that becomes salient with the fourth stage of

Erikson's life-cycle model, during the school-age years before adolescence. During this stage children become more focused on producing things instead of simply doing things. They "learn to win recognition by producing things. ... To bring a productive situation to completion is an aim which gradually supersedes the whims and wishes of play."(Erikson, p. 259) They begin in earnest to learn the tools, both physical and cognitive, whose application will be necessary for success in adult roles. Failures in this process may produce feelings of inferiority. This may lead to pessimism regarding the ability to acquire particular skills. The inclination to imitate and identify with adults whose roles require those skills may be discouraged. Hence, success during this stage requires a progression of developmentally appropriate learning experiences that lead gradually toward mastery, and social supports that provide reassurances against feelings of inferiority and discouragement.

For YouthBuild, this stage of "industry versus inferiority" is the period when youth become "industriously" involved in the quest to learn and master skills. Ideally, it is a period of deep instrumental engagement, as defined above. Gradually, youth become more sure of themselves and begin to use their new skills more independently, including outside of the program. The downside at this stage is that efforts will sometimes fail and that failure may provoke feelings of inferiority and pessimism. Supportive peers and trusted advisors at this stage are very important to help correct mistakes and to provide reassurances that the participant has the ability to achieve the mastery that he or she seeks.

Same Activities But Greater Focus

The basic counseling and instructional activities of the program have been going on for several months by the time that a large percentage of trainees reaches this phase of their development in the program. Staff members do not suddenly change what they have been doing and saying, but trainees respond with more urgency, interest and excitement than during the earlier months.

If the staff has guided them successfully through the developmental tasks addressed above, then students now have well-defined goals for themselves in the program. Students at this stage ask questions seriously because they *need* the answers. Conversely, trainees for whom tasks from prior stages are unresolved may remain ambivalent and uncommitted. If they stay in the program, they will tend not to engage industriously toward any particular outcome. Of course, it is conceivable that a trainee might reach industry in one aspect of the program and not in another. However, the following trainee, speaking in the final months of the program, sees a clear distinction between those who have reached the stage of industry and those who have not:

> The same guys that mess around in the classroom mess around on the construction site. The guys that really want to work actually get down there and work.

As might be expected, more youth become industrious as the end of the program approaches. They worry that they will not have time to complete what they have set out to achieve. As long as success seems possible, the fact that time is short is a reason to become more focused:

> But in a way it is kind of hard [to resist distractions] but right now I don't even let that bother me 'cause I know it's getting too close. This program is almost over in September so I know I got to buckle down. So, all that hanging and indulging I just cut it off.

Another explains:

> It's like a man going through a party, and it's crowded with people, and you're trying to get to the other side. But on the way, it's like people offering you, "Here, take a little bit of this, take a little bit of that." And you're trying to stay on track, and tryin to get over there. You know, you might stop and say, "Well, I'll take a

> little bit of this, I'll take a little bit of that," but then you're off track. You might not never get there. But if you stay focused, and do what you gotta do, and go through the, you know, you want it, but you just gotta say, "Damn, I gotta get over there. I gotta get what I gotta get." And just directing all your energies. . .

Goals Need to be Attractive and Feasible

A requirement for youth to remain industrious toward particular goals is that the goals must seem both attractive and feasible. Earlier in the chapter we introduced the idea that basic human motives or drives or needs are the fundamental things that drive human behavior. The motives we listed were achievement, influence, affiliation and security. All are relevant here. For example, *affiliation* comes when youth share the joy of *achievement* with staff and peers in the program and with family members at home. *Influence* is a payoff to be expected from accumulating knowledge sufficient to become a tutor for other students, an assistant to a relative on a home repair project or a lobbyist for the YouthBuild program in Washington DC. The internal satisfaction of *achievement* is a payoff when students master new understandings or complete projects. Finally, a sense of *security* about the future grows as youth become more confident of their ability to find employment using their new skills and to negotiate with more confidence through everyday life. Hence, most fundamentally, the potential to experience achievement, affiliation, influence and security are keys in determining what goals and what activities youth will find attractive.

In YouthBuild, sustained belief in the feasibility of goals often requires that staff will be available and responsive to teach required skills and strategies. If staff fulfill these conditions, then students may set goals in association with any or all components of the program. A student's goal for the education component may be to earn the GED, for the counseling component may be to work through unresolved personal problems, for the construction component may be to learn enough to become handy around the house or to take on small carpentry jobs for pay. For the leadership component, his or her goal may be to become comfortable speaking in front of groups, or leading meetings. These are only some of the goals that students often decide to pursue.

Youth become less motivated and less likely to remain industrious if the effort seems unlikely to produce desired rewards. Explanations for such outcomes may focus on internal or external causes. External causes might include inadequacies in staff members' teaching practices or financial constraints that limit the availability of necessary teaching materials.

"Attributional" theories of motivation distinguish whether causes of success and failure are perceived as internal or external, and controllable or uncontrollable.[112] No matter whether they are internally or externally located, if causes for particular outcomes are perceived as determined by factors that are uncontrollable, industriousness toward producing those outcomes is discouraged. When the trainee feels that an initial failure was his or her own fault and due to factors s/he could have controlled, then s/he may become even more determined to succeed and to try again. Conversely, feelings of inferiority, the nominal down side of "industry versus inferiority," come from explanations that point to internal causes that are stable and uncontrollable. A perceived lack of native intellectual ability is the most prevalent internal and uncontrollable explanation for failure. Just as with external explanations that are uncontrollable, belief in immutable inferiority makes success seem infeasible and therefore it dampens industry.

According to interviews, encouragement from teachers and the experience of success in the classroom made a big difference to students who came in with feelings of intellectual inferiority. By increasing young people's estimates of their own abilities, and helping them to understand that ability grows in response to effort, effective teachers broaden the scope of what youth regard as possible.[113]

---

[112] See, for example, Garber and Seligman, eds., 1980.

Effective Teachers Make Goals Feasible

Instructors at YouthBuild sites are extremely sensitive to the fact that many of their students enter with feelings of intellectual inferiority. Most staff members work hard to show that every student has the ability to master what the program seeks to teach and that s/he is, indeed, much smarter than others have lead him or her to believe. Almost every site in the demonstration had at least one teacher who demonstrated an ability to give even the slowest students a better understanding of the material that classes covered. Often, this required that classes move a bit more slowly or that individual attention was given after class. Only a few instructors lacked the patience or the personality to foster the impression that everyone could succeed in the YouthBuild classroom and, sooner or later, earn the GED.

Teachers in YouthBuild whose students regard them as the most effective give a great deal of encouragement, have almost endless patience with students who are making an honest effort, give a great deal of individualized attention, communicate a joy for learning and make concerted efforts to deliver lessons that are stimulating. However, of all these characteristics, patience is the one that students talk about most.

---

[113] The importance of beliefs regarding the nature of ability is an important theme in Carol Dweck's research. She finds empirically that youth who regard intelligence as fixed tend to adopt performance goals, including keeping their lack of ability a secret if they believe that they are not smart. Those who believe that ability responds to effort tend to adopt mastery goals. The latter continue to exert effort even if they believe that they are not smart. See: Dweck, 1991; Dweck and Leggett, 1988.

Students regard patience as a sign that teachers believe that they *can* learn and care whether they *do* learn. It is a sign that teachers are determined not to leave people behind, as happened so often to these students in regular schools. Trainees report that once they knew that a teacher would be patient, they were no longer afraid to ask questions. There was hope. It was easier to remain industrious in the classroom and to expect results from the effort.

While most teachers were patient with students' questions, a few responded in ways that some students say made them reluctant to ask for help. At one site, the writing teacher was praised widely for her patience and her determination not to leave anyone behind, but the math teacher inadvertently discouraged learning. About the math teacher, a trainee reports, "It's like with him, you never be right. He's always the one right and he's going to make you try to feel as stupid as you can." Hence, the math teacher's propensity to be self-congratulatory and condescending made this particular trainee and others whom we interviewed reluctant to ask him questions.

The percentage of students reaching the industry stage in preparation for the GED will tend to be greatest at sites where all of the teachers are both excellent teachers and patient enough that students feel free to seek their help one-on-one. In fact, the site where this was most true is the "flagship" site-year where youth achieved the largest number of GED certificates. No student that we interviewed accused either of this site's teachers of being unreceptive to questions or of leaving students behind. A student says the following about the sites' math teacher:

> She's like the best I had so far. Like with my math, ... I'm moving right along with my math 'cause she explains it more thoroughly than a high school teacher that'll tell you how to do it once and you have to figure out the rest yourself, you know? You might not understand and got to stay after school and [she] could sit there with you all day and help you out. You know? And before that day's over you know what you're doing.

Similarly, he says the following about the writing teacher:

> I never had a English teacher like [him]. We go out and see things. We don't just sit in class all the time and do regular English work. We go out, like museums and parks and stuff like that, to see about different things and our culture and all that stuff. And then we write about it. Sometimes we get tired of writing but it's like he's doing it for a reason. ... He'll let us know if we're doing it right or if we got misspelled or something like that or our punctuations are wrong and stuff.

Another student says:

> You know, he spends time. He tries to make what he's teaching simple enough for you to understand. He don't try to use all that jargon and big words, you know you're scratching your head all the time and this stuff. He really wants you to learn what's going on, especially about your culture.

These representative passages show some of what it takes for students in YouthBuild to begin believing that achieving the GED is a feasible goal. One student at this "flagship" site describes how the fear of asking for help goes away:

> No, I wasn't used to asking for help. By all means I wasn't. . . . When I first came here I really didn't want to be like, "How do I do this?" Or, "How do I do that?" It just gradually came to me when people help you, you know? You overcome those boundaries. You know? I didn't feel so secluded anymore. You know? I didn't feel intimidated or stupid to ask somebody how to do a problem.

Patience combined with encouragement signals to students that the teacher believes that they can do the work. When the teacher is patient with *everyone* the message is that *everyone* can do it. The class becomes a team. The more strongly students trust that teachers will see them and their classmates through, the more industriously engaged they become both as individuals and as a "family:"

> He keeps pushing us. They don't let you give up here. Not in YouthBuild, and I feel like that's good. Because if people don't want to try, they going to make you try. And you're not going to regret it. That's the positive thing about YouthBuild, they won't let you give up. They will not let you do it. And I like that.

A similar statement comes from a student at another site:

> Trainee: Because he'll push you, push you, push you to strive for that GED.
>
> Interviewer: You know sometimes people push people that just want to be left

> alone.
>
> Trainee: He don't push you like that. He push you to make you want it. ... Like it's how some people sit back in the class and they were like, he'll call you to the board to do some problems on the board, like in regular school, people wouldn't want to go up there. He'll tell you [that] you have to go up there. And that'd break the ice of you being, you know, serious about going up to the boards and stuff in front of classes. . . . you start getting used to it, then you start just blending in and you want to get your GED because you start realizing how important that is and you can't really do nothing without it.

Evidence Sustains Hope

Sites that are most effective at producing GEDs use milestones along the way. At all of the sites, staff talk to students continually about the importance of the GED and the need to keep working hard in preparation. But for students, the year seems long and it can begin to seem like they will never be fully prepared -- the time to go for the exam will never come.

Some sites establish milestones using practice exams. Passing a practice exam makes it seem that passing the GED is a bit closer. Another milestone that has a positive demonstration effect is when the first trainee from the year's cohort passes the actual exam, or some part of it. It shows that passing is feasible. The student in the passage below explains the importance for her of learning that someone in her class had taken and passed the exam. She says:

> It's too bad it [didn't] happen any sooner. A lot of people that been dropped out, [I'd bet] any amount of money they would have stood in the program and stuck it out. But since it seemed like no one got their GEDs and it seemed like hopeless and [we were] just repeating the things over and over and over and no telling when they'd be able to take it or anything like that, kind of like, it was hopeless. It's kind of hard to explain. It just became a boring thing to them after a while.
>
> Well, after I heard some people got their GEDs, I was happy for them, and I was saying, "Damn, it's about time I started looking at getting my GED now." Before I just look at it just day-after-day. Just work, study, work, study. Not paying attention when I'm ready to take my GED. 'Cause I never asked the teachers or

> myself if I'm ready, or anything like that.
>
> But after I see people start taking their GEDs, I say, "Maybe I'm ready." So, I decided to take it. Last week I took it. Literature Arts, I passed one. Now, I take one every Wednesday, 'cause they only allow one test, Wednesday night at 5:30. So I take another one tonight at 5:30, Social Studies. So, I'm kind of nervous about that. All day that's all I've been thinking about, is passing that GED, that test. Then after I finish that I will have my Literature Arts and Social Studies done. Then all I have to do is Writing and Math and Science. And I got [the teacher] to help me go through math and science and that shouldn't be hard at all. Because he's a good teacher and I can understand the way he's teaching. He can teach me. He knows how to reach me. So, it will be easy for me.

Seeing others' successes helped this student to shift firmly into "industry" with respect to passing the GED exam.

Awards can help as well. The following student describes how awards motivated him and how good he felt when he earned one.

> The last time I saw students get up and get awards I said I'm going to get me an award. And I meant it. And then I worked hard and the teachers started noticing that. I'd sit off and do my work. And at open house I got my honor roll award. ... It made me feel good 'cause I was so sad. I said, "I don't like this. I don't like to feel that I've been outdone." I want to feel that I've achieved my goals and I'm working for what I really want and then when I just saw the kids get up there and got their awards I was like, "No, I couldn't do that." I said, "Next go round get my award," and I got it. I got my award. And it made me feel outstanding. And then the applause that people gave me, it made me feel good. That I'm really doing something for myself. That's how it made me feel.

The GED classroom is only one component of the YouthBuild Program. The issues addressed above in the context of GED preparation appear again only slightly changed in the context of construction skills training, leadership training and counseling.[114] In each component, the characteristics of adult-youth relationships that make for hopefulness and successful learning are the same: youth need to have clear goals and to feel that those goals are both attractive and, with the staff's support, feasible. When these conditions are sustained, youth tend to be more industrious and more able to overcome feelings of helplessness and inferiority. In addition, the mutual support that youth give to one another and the evidence of success that they represent to one another are important dimensions of what motivates and sustains industriousness.

---

[114] There is not enough space in the present paper to include text on the other components. A longer version of this paper includes discussion of the industry vs. inferiority stage for construction, counseling and leadership. It is available from the author.

Industriousness at the Construction Site

All of the examples from the last several pages have come from the GED preparation component of the program. Similar examples are available for construction training. The more patient and responsive teachers were, the more engaged students were. Most of the time trainees had great respect and affection for their construction teachers. One explains how he knew that the construction teacher cared:

> Well, because the fact that he, if you interested in something he'll go out of his way to make sure you have that that you're interested in. He'll go out of his way. If you say, "I need to do something like this in my house." If it don't have nothing to do with the subject he'd go out of his way. He'd stop class and say, "Here, this is what you do. This is how you get it." You know and just take time off like. And that's, you know I could tell. Body language, you can tell if a person cared. He was willing to stand up and talk to the class, move around and get people involved.

Continuing, the trainee in this passage (who already has a high school degree) says he doubts that he would stay in the program if this instructor was to leave. He says,

> I couldn't see staying because I couldn't imagine no one who would come in and be as knowledgeable as he is and display that knowledge like he does in a caring way.

Similar things were said about instructors at other sites, with a few exceptions. Students of the few instructors who were not so revered were less enthusiastic about their training.

An example above addressed the demonstration effect of seeing others earn the GED. Evidence of success by peers motivates industriousness at the construction site just as it does in the GED classroom. In the following example, two trainees had begun earning money using their construction skills. They had consulted their instructor for advice on how to do the job. When others heard about the entrepreneurial successes that the first two were having, they asked to be included.

> Trainee: I've learned several things in the construction trade because I've actually went out and used some of the construction skills that I've learned here and made a little side money on the side.
>
> Interviewer: Doing what kinds of things?
>
> Trainee: Drywall, painting, taping. I've helped out with some footings. Me and my friend Andretti, we shingled a roof, patched a hole. We're going back during the Easter break to do another two roofs. We're going to lay some carpeting. Also, fix a bathroom wall. So if you actually sit down and actually learn the construction trade you can actually make money. And see when Andretti and I were making the money, everyone was saying, "Dang, how you doing this? You need some more help? You want us to help?" "No, we don't need any help because you all are not doing the work here. Why am I going to bring you out and mess up a job that could be potentially, it can bring us more profit as far as training plus money. If you wouldn't have worked for the $1.75 here what makes you think that okay you'll come out and work for something higher?" I mean money will make people work but this is money also. If you don't work for peanuts how are you going to work for the profit?
>
> Interviewer: How did they take that when you said it to them, when you put it like that?
>
> Trainee: Well, a lot of people didn't like the way we said it. But, we noticed that later on they started actually getting to work. Because we were going to try and get six guys that are dedicated, which we've basically got the ones we want, just put an ad in the paper and go around, do a little work for relatives, not charging a contractor's wage, just a little -- I hate to say it, but -- scab work [chuckles].
>
> Trainee: We discussed the plans [for the first job] and [a construction teacher], he came up and helped us out on his own time. He came over on the weekends and looked to see if we were doing the things right, started us out and didn't ask for anything out of our earnings. He just wanted to make sure we were doing something constructive. Okay, so after we did that then she liked the way we did it so she turned us on to some more people and we painted her house. . . . Because in July we're not going to be in this program any more so we're going to have to find something to do. And whether we enter the union or not we still have to live. So, that's why I'm taking advantage of this.

This example illustrates the way that industriousness depends on trusting relationships between students and teachers, and the spillover effect of success as a motivator for other students.

The partners in the example above are probably the most outgoing entrepreneurs of the trainees that we encountered. However, others also found ways to use their new skills outside of the program, often with advice from the construction teacher. The following are examples.

> [My aunt] had us make an extra step for her. The step broke. And they [the construction teachers] showed us how to do the measurement so that it'd fit exactly and all that. So it was easier. If I wasn't [in YouthBuild] I'd have just did it the way I usually do stuff, you know, grab a piece of wood about this long and that long and slap it together and throw it in there. Make it look strange. [We made it] look like somebody who knew what they was doing was there. Got paid for it and stuff.

In another case, the trainee botched the job and the instructor advised him on how to fix it:

> Trainee: It's a small bathroom. It's only about five feet. First of all it was like cobwebs all over the walls and everything. . . . The toilet was messed up -- it kept leaking out the side. The floors was just a piece of crap. It was just linoleum laid down on a piece of plywood and it was coming up at the edges. It was pretty messed up. The shower wasn't really working too well. [My fiancee's parents] paid me to do it for them and they also bought all the materials that I needed. . . .
>
> I messed up pretty much at first but I asked my construction manager about it, "How should I do this?" And he told me how I should do it. Went back and I did it. It came out right. . . . It felt great. It was the first project I ever accomplished by myself. The first thing I ever seen complete in my entire construction career. It didn't come out too shabby, either.

In each case above, this was the first time that the trainee had produced something of value on his or her own and gotten paid for it. The critical role of the instructor as a trusted advisor is clear in both passages.

Just as the expectation of earning the GED motivates youth to work hard in the classroom, the expectation of a job motivates those who want jobs in construction to be industrious on the construction site. Youth who do not want jobs in construction are typically somewhat less engaged. However, most do what they are asked, often citing the usefulness of the skills for future home repairs. For example:

> Hopefully I'll have me a home and it'll save me money, you know as far as like if something breaks I can fix it myself. I don't have to pay all the extra money for someone else to do it. I can just go out and buy the part, fix it myself. I don't have to pay for the labor.

This seemed to be the typical attitude. However, between one quarter and one half of the trainees had a real interest in construction. Among this group, some were quite intensively engaged. Some felt as though they were already engaged in the work that would be their new career. For example,

> Trainee: I come home, man, people see me, "Oh, you got a job, man?" "Yeah." "You making good money, man?" "Yeah." (I don't tell 'em I'm making $22 a day.) Yeah, you know what I'm saying, it's good for me, man, you know because I look at it as if I'm coming home with brand new sneakers on, gold jewelry all over your hands and your neck, something like that. Come home, dirty, take a nice shower. Act like a real person. That's being a real man or woman. You come home from 9-5 or 4-8 and see you did something good today. You know? You not out there handing out drugs doing something negative. You know?
>
> Interviewer: Does that get you pumped to come back the next day when you see . . .
>
> Trainee: Ah, man, definitely, man. And then as you on the construction site, you see what you're doing, you say, "Oh, I did this today." So tomorrow you want to do something more, more for, you know you learnin but it's just for me like a real job. Put me on a internship, I can go out there and show you know skills you all gave me to the people out there with the real money. That's how I feel. I feel [great].

Another works hard because he expects that impressing the instructors will lead them to put him at the front of the line for jobs.

> Trainee: They think that I'm a workaholic. It's a change from when I used to get fired and have bad habits, here this is what I like to do I like to build these things, this is what I like. So, I just give everything I got over there. I just keep on going. And everybody thinks that I'm slaving or that I'm kissing ass. Or they say that, "We're just not the same." I should respect what they do. I say, "I know you guys can, you just don't want to."
>
> Interviewer: The future for you, does it involve construction? Is this somethin' you really want to do?

> Trainee: Yeah, this is something I want to do. Because like [the staff] were telling me they have lots of other contractors and they promised they were going to hire from YouthBuild, or people with good records and good records is something I'm doing my best so I can get sent out there. That's what I want. ... I'm just giving it all I got so I can be sent down from YouthBuild to get a job, be a carpenter. What I want to do is like build the outside of the houses, like the frames, then dry wall 'em. That's what I want to do. ... Wherever they send me I would go. 'Cause this is what I really want to do.

Finally, some trainees who have no interest in construction as a career nevertheless value working on the construction site because it is teaching them how it feels to have a job -- it is teaching them the basics of employability. For example,

> I been through it. I've been through every aspect of the gang. I done seen the down points and the up points. A lot can be down, but a lot of up. But now, it's like, I got steel clothes on, got some Dicky Dirties jeans on and a black -- see all that shit? It's filthy! But everyday I come home, I feel good. I'm filthy 'cause I worked. Not because of getting roughed up, or roughing somebody up. I feel good.

A youth from another site reports:

> That's like one thing, teaching me how to be motivated. Keeping me from being very lazy, 'cause I'm constantly working. You can't sit on the work site. You be there from 8-4 working and standing up. . . . When I finish here I want to go to college. I want to get into music. I don't want to get into no construction trade or nothing like that. When I'm on the construction site I participate, you know, like we doing this building, we put down floors and stuff. So I just participate until I finish the program.

The following trainee provides a good summary statement:

> All the students aren't really interested in it but I think gettin' out there and workin' hard there ain't nothin' wrong with that. Everybody needs to experience some hard work. Plus, then if they take an interest to it then that'll be good. Even if they don't decide to follow that then at least they'll have a little personal knowledge. They might want to build something with their house for their kids, you know. Me, myself, I might use it as a job to get by until I go back to school. Or go back to school and maybe get out of school and go to work for a while until I get into something else.

While this stage is called "industry versus inferiority," our interviews did not encounter students who felt that they had put forth an effort but experienced failure on the construction site. Hence, feelings of "inferiority" were rare if they occurred at all.

Perhaps failure would have been more common if the training curriculum had been more demanding. However, considering first that the primary purpose was to provide a successful work experience, and second, that the majority do not plan careers in construction, challenging students enough to produce more failures would defeat the purpose. The advantage of construction as a context for employability training is that it requires hard work and produces a visible and tangible product as evidence of effort that was well-directed.

The primary down side of the construction component during the demonstration was the difficulty that some sites experienced finding appropriate construction projects. For several sites, the inability to secure suitable projects was sometimes an impediment to proper training. Activities often had to fit the available projects, instead of projects fitting some ideal curriculum. Some students grew dissatisfied as demolition and clean-up projects extended well into the program year. Some became pessimistic regarding whether the program could keep its promises for teaching "construction" skills. Describing one cleanup project, a trainee complains:

> We'd be putting stuff into a bucket, walking it outside to the dumpster. That's it. That's our job. The clean-up crew, YouthBuild clean up.

Trainees understood that the shortage of appropriate work represented no fault of their own and was mostly beyond the control of directors. Still their morale was dampened and some dropped out of the program as a consequence. Others stuck with the program and rationalized:

> You got to look at it in a different perspective. See, building also has demolition. Now, if you don't know demolition -- say after this program, say if you just went on and you lived your life as a carpenter, and you build for the rest of your life, all you know is to build. Say that you get a old fix-up house and you got to remodel it. You're going to have to pay somebody to come in and do the demolition work, 'cause you don't know how to.

None of the sites did only demolition and cleanup. All taught at least some of the skills and techniques of building. Still, it must be true that fewer youth were industrious in this aspect of the program than would have been if the projects had been more consistently appropriate for instructional goals.

Industry in the Leadership Component

As stated in the introduction, "leadership" in YouthBuild means taking responsibility for making things go right in several domains: for self, family, program and community. The specific experience that youth have regarding leadership varies a great deal from one site to another and among trainees at each site. Nevertheless, each trainee receives a great deal of exposure to YouthBuild's basic ideas about leadership. Every trainee that we interviewed could give the YouthBuild definition of leadership, and most claimed to be taking more responsibility than before for themselves. Many could site ways that they were taking more responsibility in each of the domains that the definition touches upon.

Working to set a better example for neighborhood children was a common thing that they talked about. For example:

> Well basically they teach you how to get along with the community better. How to actually look at your community as more of a home all as one. Like where you're living and your area, you know you got to give back to community. ...
>
> They don't look at me like being a Johnny-square boy, nothing like that. They still respect me for straight turning my life around. Matter of fact, all my homies start to get into YouthBuild now. All my young homies start getting into YouthBuild. See, they thought I couldn't do it, 'cause they know how I was. Man, they knew what I was. And it's like, "I did it. Look at me, I'm still living good."
>
> When you're in your community a lot of people take it for granted, they kick it and just don't do nothing. Especially older people in the program, they may go back to the community and don't talk to the youngsters. You're their idol man. You do what they couldn't do or what their uncles or brothers didn't do. You've done it and they've hung around with you and you was just as bad as they was. So it's like Youth Build, it helps me to take the lead.

Other trainees gave similar testimonies. In addition, sites had several examples of service activities that the program had organized.

The strongest examples of industriousness in the exercise of leadership, in the more traditional sense of the word, come from work by members of Youth Policy Committees (YPCs) at each site and the Youth Caucus that helped lobby for federal funding. Earlier in the chapter a long passage recounted how the trainees at one site organized a community meeting -- first among trainees and then among trainees and staff. The meeting helped to clear the air of bad feelings so that the program could operate with less mistrust and tension. Other examples exist for that same site as well as for others.

Typically, aside from a heavy emphasis on personal responsibility, staff and directors at the sites did not treat the leadership component of the program as seriously as the other components. The Youth Policy Committee was a critically important instrument during particular periods, and then largely dormant during other periods. Capacity did not exist to make the YPC as effective an instructional instrument as it might have been. The will was lacking as well. Confusion regarding the proper role of the YPC appeared to be among the reasons. For example, at least one sites involved the YPC in judging their peers' behaviors and selecting punishments. That effort failed. The YPC at that site never functioned well because of the lack of appropriate guidance.

Staff and directors sometimes argue that the YPC is an inappropriate body for a YouthBuild site because youth will not be asked to participate in decision making on the jobs that they are likely to take. Hence, the YPC is raising false expectations about the world of work. When told that the more appropriate metaphor might be community participation, not work-place governance, one director agreed, but did no better the next year with the way the YPC was handled. YouthBuild USA produced a leadership handbook that was available for the second year of the demonstration, but it did not appear from our interviews that the sites made much use of it. Hence, youth leadership activities through the YPC typically were not nurtured to the degree that they would produce widespread and sustained achievement of industriousness in traditional leadership or service activities.

Failure to see the YPC as an instrument for youth development often caused staff members to focus on what they regarded as trainees' incompetence to perform decision-making roles. One staff member says:

> The reason why some of these students are in the position they're in now is because they are making bad decisions about their lives. They're incompetent, they're not capable of following up, they don't have that stick-to-it-iveness. And to give students that much power is like a curse. They would misuse the power every time.

In a similar discussion another declared that the trainees were not ready for power:

> It's ridiculous to have them come in to me. It's ridiculous to have those people who just came in off the street tell me what they need. Cause if you that smart and you know what you need, then what are you doing in YouthBuild? Cause YouthBuild ain't no prep school.

Perspectives such as these come from a misunderstanding of the proper place of the YPC in YouthBuild. Responsibility for some of the confusion must rest with YouthBuild USA, which seemed at times to describe the YPC as a partner in decision making. Failure to directly address the limits of YPC influence caused staff members such as these to be overly preoccupied with the possibility that the YPC would make bad decisions or abuse its power. As we stated earlier, some even thought the YPC had the power to have them fired. Staff members' ambivalence and lack of respect for the YPC surely diminished the degree to which youth were inclined to use as an instrument.

Despite ambivalence among staff, it is clear that the YPC or some alternative way of giving students a collective voice is an absolutely indispensable organ of the program.

YouthBuild would be a fundamentally different program without it. When youth became episodically activated to use it, the outcomes were virtually always positive and the experience produced lasting lessons.

The five sites over two cycles that we studied produced examples where program officials encouraged industriousness by the YPC, and other examples where they discouraged it. For example, when officials summarily rejected the first real suggestions from the YPC at one site, the chairperson lost enthusiasm:

> We [the YPC] listen to what the students are saying. Then when we have a committee meeting we say, "This is what the students are saying, and this is maybe what the students would like to have from us talking to them and being around." And so we present that to the staff. And then when they come back and say, "Well, now, we can't do this." Then it's like, well what's the use of even bringing these things to them.

The YPC at the above site was not at all well handled by the staff in the episode that produced this quotation from the chairman of the YPC. Conversely, at a second site, the YPC felt influential because the director would listen carefully to their arguments and then explain why he would or would not accept the advice that they were offering:

> They treat us more like adults than in high school. They want us to, you know, they, like we make up our rules. We have a Policy Committee. I'm on the Policy Committee. And there's seven of us on the Policy Committee, and we meet up, we ask everybody, you know, what's going on, what they feel is not going on right, and stuff. Then you take it to [the director] and we vote on it, and you know, we make the rules. They treat us like adults. We make our own rules. But if it's going too far or something [the director] can say, "No." But if it's reasonable, you know, we make our own rules. They treat us like adults.

Contrast this with what was a shared perspective from a third site. This is the site that initially had the YPC acting as a student court, abandoned that approach, then saw the committee cease to function at all because the organization's managerial leadership did not value it:

> Interviewer: What role does the policy committee play?

> Trainee: You're supposed to go to them with your problems and let them know about your problems and everything so they'll take it upstairs, you know. And everybody have a meeting. But that's a bunch of bull. Nobody even think about no policy committee. I don't even think it is a policy committee no more.
>
> Interviewer: What do you think if you had a problem and you went to the policy committee? I mean, it's near the end of the program now so it's a little bit tougher but you know, suppose you had a problem a few weeks ago, whatever and you went to the policy committee? Would anything happen?
>
> Trainee: I doubt it. I doubt it.
>
> Interviewer: Why?
>
> Trainee: The staff -- they just tell you anything just to get you out of their hair or whatever.

Other youth at the site had similar perspectives.

A fourth site provides a more positive note on which to end this string of examples. This site, like the second one above, usually used the YPC well, even though it went through periods of inactivity. This is the site where the YPC organized the cathartic meeting that we reviewed in an earlier section.

> Interviewer: How different would YouthBuild be if there was not a Youth Policy Committee?
>
> Trainee: Mmm. Very different. Because, it gives the trainees the opportunity to really feel a part of YouthBuild. Like this is for us, and they feel that they're actually doing something not only for themselves but for others. Because when you come here you go to school and you do construction, that's really what you decided to do. You come to school. But, you really feel like you're really a part of an organization. You're really part of a group who's working with the same causes and everything like that. So, the committee, that's how that plays a good part for the trainees, because there's so much that's needed and we can help the staff with all kind of things.
>
> Interviewer: Like what?
>
> Trainee: I guess, if there's a situation amongst trainees and staff, we would bring that to the committee. Or, if there's situations with trainees amongst trainees we'll bring that to the committee. Or, if there's traveling that needed to be done for modeling or fund-raising or for just to speak out about what our program is about then that's when it's introduced to the committee. Even though the other trainees still have the opportunity to do things like that, too. But, I guess the committee is

> what, it's what gives the trainees leadership. It gives them leadership and they really initiate themselves.
>
> Interviewer: Well is it bogus or is it real? Because sometimes when you're in sixth grade you can have like a little student government, but yet still you know that the teacher and the principal are running the show.
>
> Trainee: Yes. No, no, no. I feel what we do on the committee really does make a difference. We actually see it making a difference. And we really do have a say. It's not like a really big say, but we say and what we feel that we think will better the program, they actually take heed to. They really listen to it and they really do do something about it. They really try to apply it to the program. "Oh, really? You really think that's going to help?" They really do try. They say, "Well, why not? It's not going to hurt anything. And if it benefits."
>
> Interviewer: I sat in one Youth Policy Committee and [the director] was there and they were talking about fund-raising and it was like [the director] was running the show, setting the agenda and it was, who decides and identifies the issues that you all are going to be dealing with?
>
> Trainee: Well, if we haven't come up with something, then [the director] will already have something to talk about unless we have our own issues that we're going to bring. Most of the time when we start talking about some things, then other things start coming up. And then we start talking about those things, too. Sometimes we're just not prepared. A lot of times we weren't prepared. We just came, the mandatory, to be in the meetin', but everyone wasn't always prepared.

The fact that students sometimes tire of the YPC and do not prepare for meetings helps to explain why sometimes the YPC does not meet at all when staff and directors tire of carrying the effort. Nevertheless, the example above probably comes as close to a well-operating YPC as any that we encountered during the demonstration.

Two sites achieved this standard. These were the only sites that came even close sustaining industriousness in the operation of the YPC. At both sites, the directors genuinely valued the YPC's insights on particular decisions, especially on hiring. One says,

> When I interviewed people I interviewed candidates that I thought were really excellent and when we meet with the YPC I see a whole different side to that person that I would have hired, that I would never hire -- let alone the students not hiring them.

Concerning help with hiring decisions, the other director who worked well with the YPC says: "They bring an insight and a recognition of how an adult is going to relate to them." In an interesting episode at this latter site, a job candidate disrespected a student on the way into the building only to find that the student was among the group to interview him. Needless to say, he was not hired.

Finally, a small number of students from each site achieved a high level of industriousness in helping YouthBuild USA to lobby for federal support for the YouthBuild Program. We end this section with the testimony of some of the youth who assisted in the lobbying effort.

> Trainee #1: I've done a lot of public speaking in YouthBuild, I've done a lot of lobbying, and I was always too afraid to do any of that. I always said, "No, no, no. I'm not going to do it." They always said, "No, you can do it." And by the time I get there, I just start running my mouth. But, if I had tried to do that on my own, I wouldn't have never done it. I would have been too shy.
>
> Trainee #2: When I went to Washington they was like, "We're going to go to this meeting and each one of you are going to have to talk to get funds to show to these people that we need the money for the program." So I'm sitting down there like I don't know what I'm going to say, what can I say? You know, look at all these people. And then somebody pulled me aside and he said, "Each one of these people is just like you. The only thing that's different is they got on a suit and a tie and you got on a T-shirt, that's the only thing that's different and you could talk to these people. Don't lie to them, be honest and true, 'cause they going to know." Then I sat down, and after a while I realized that hey, this is just another man and another lady listening to me. Right now they might have a job and I don't but right now they listening to me and they want to hear what I got to say. So I say what I had to say. You know, when I was small I always wanted to have some kind of job where I could just talk 'cause I liked giving speeches and stuff and Dorothy Stoneham [sic] was like, "You impressed everybody." And she was like, "I'm proud of you." She was like, "I had my doubts, but you showed me something different." And then it made me proud. And then I was like, "I'm from YouthBuild Gary. Remember that YouthBuild Gary," and I impressed myself. And then after that I never been scared to talk to nobody.
>
> Trainee #3: They let me run the conference this year. I don't even know why. They just called me and asked me did I want to run the Washington conference, the May conference. I was like, "I don't care. I'll do it." And not run it all the way but most, I ran, I opened up every morning and ran workshops. When we went lobbying to the Capitol Hill and stuff. They made me run my own delegation. Like everybody [else] had a older person, a director or somebody with them. But they put me in charge. I was like, "Well, who am I? What am I supposed to do."

> They're like, "You did it last year. You know what to do." And ours went smoothly. Talked to the people, ask them to support YouthBuild. Told them what it was about. They really liked it that I was a participant and I was staff now. They was like, "Oh, that's great." We got everybody to support us.
>
> Trainee #4: And while I was in Washington, we were over there lobbying for fifty million dollars or something like that, for YouthBuild. And I was in there talking to these representative's aides and I am over there talking to them giving them all the positive aspects on YouthBuild and why Youth Build should be in our communities and what it does for urban life and what not. A couple of these ladies, while I was talking to them, they said, hey everybody, hold on a second, you ought to do this for a living. That right there, made me feel like I was accomplishing something, I could do this.

YouthBuild now has federal funding. That success is due in no small part to the conviction with which these and other young people testified to the importance of the program in their lives and their communities.

Industry and Counseling

Counselors affect every aspect of the YouthBuild program. Their fingerprints are everywhere because they help solve problems that allow students to continue functioning. They do some of their work in scheduled appointments, but much of it during impromptu encounters in the hallways or while responding to crises. While helping to solve problems, they also help students to develop and to use good judgment in solving their own problems. The same is true for program managers and directors. They solve problems and counsel youth continually using both formal and informal mechanisms.

Below, we offer examples of two trainees who industriously and regularly used the counseling relationship, and another who did not. The difference in the examples is that two expected the counselor to be caring, insightful, responsive and confidential. The other did not. First:

> One of the counselors here, [name], me and him we became really tight. I got into some trouble. I got into an argument with my lady friend that I was staying with,

> an argument had jumped out and I had left. And I called [the counselor] that night -- woke him up out of his sleep! And when I told him what had happened, he gave me some advice and that morning, I took maybe about an hour off from school just to clear myself out. I left and two of the counselors here, [names] and a couple of students they came to pick me up, to show that they're behind me. Support. You need some support, being behind. It's not like I was out there, and they didn't care. All I really needed was just somebody to talk to. And they was there for me. It turned out to be pretty good. A bad situation turned into something -- I can't call it really positive -- a bad situation was put behind me just because somebody got up out of their sleep and just talked to you.

This is not an unusual example. Once they trust the counselors, many youth use them to work through personal problems. The following example from another site is less typical, but still important because it illustrates failure. It shows what can happen when trust is absent in the counseling relationship:

> Trainee: Personally, the way I feel, I don't have no counselor here. The only counselors I have is my friends. And those are my counselors.
>
> Interviewer: So if things get tough you wouldn't come to any of the staff here?
>
> Trainee: No. . . .Because they tell you when you got problems you come here, but they're not being inquisitive on your problems, man. They don't seem like they really want to hear it. I mean sometimes I have problems I go to [the construction manager], I'll go to [the program manager], I'll talk to even [the other counselor] and he's not my counselor. He's a counselor but he's not my counselor. [Name] is my counselor, I don't even talk to [him] ... Personally, like I said, man, my counselors are my friends, you know? Period. I wouldn't go to them with anything real, real serious. I'd go to my boys. I wouldn't talk to them about my serious problems.
>
> Interviewer: Why?
>
> Trainee: It's just too personal, man. I mean before I came here, I mean, they're not here anymore but I heard a lot of rumors being spread and they could only have been spread by a counselor that had been told a certain thing, you know? ... This happened a long time ago and they're not here any more but you know, and I don't trust nobody like that. When I hear something like that I will definitely not make myself inquisitive on talking to anybody. 'Cause I don't want my business being known to anybody, you know?

Note that this mistrust is based on something that allegedly happened in a previous program cycle. The example shows that a breach of confidentiality, or even the rumor of one, can have consequences for the way that students use the program even in later years.

Another trainee had the same assigned counselor as the young man directly above. He, however, had a much different perspective on the value of the relationship. He knew the counselor before YouthBuild. To some degree, trust was in place before the program began.

> Interviewer: Which [staff] person do you talk to the most?
>
> Trainee: Probably [the counselor] or [the program manager].
>
> Interviewer: Why them?
>
> Trainee: I talk to [the counselor] a lot because -- I used to sell drugs to [him]... And to see how he's changed and his way of thinking, it motivates me because I know that little [name], his little body, has done all of these things and [then] gone to college and stuff. That's like, that's like, a role to a lot of people, you know. People see him in the neighborhoods and it's like -- he's like a star, you know? Because they figure that if he can do it and turn around and keep doin what he's doin -- I don't know if you can get any better than that. You know? Your whole world has changed and what better way to change it than doin somethin positive.
>
> And [the program manager], he's like, he's like this one arm. Like, when you're fallin, he'll just, like, hold you so don't fall and just keep, like, pushin you and hittin you in the ass so you can just move up a little further. And just watchin you all the time, makin sure that you make the right moves, and if you do make a wrong move, that you learn from that mistake and move. So he's more like a guidance, you know? He's like that extra eye...

This latter trainee is clearly industrious in his use of the program's counseling resources and it helps him to stay industrious in other aspects of the program.

The importance of effective performance in counseling roles should be clear not only from the examples directly above, but also from material earlier in this chapter. When the counseling functions are performed poorly, as they occasionally are, fewer youth in the program reach the stage of industry. Problems that might have been solved with the assistance of counselors remain distractions and hold youth back from focusing as much as they should on the work of personal development.

This section has covered issues of industriousness -- "industry versus inferiority" -- in GED preparation, construction training, leadership and use of the counseling relationship. The next and final stage that we consider is "identity versus identity confusion."

STAGE FIVE: Identity versus Identity Confusion

The fifth stage of Erikson's life-cycle model, "identity versus identity confusion," is the last that this presentation will address.[115] Settling on an "identity" is the salient task during adolescence. Before adolescence, children have a sense of themselves, but not a resolved identity. Adolescence is the period between childhood and adulthood. Rapid changes in physical development and quickly-changing expectations and responses from the external environment call into question all of the resolutions of earlier tasks. Earlier tasks are revisited in order to achieve a new synthesis. However, the "integration" that takes place during adolescence is not simply backward looking. Instead, the development of "identity" during this stage involves crafting a multidimensional image of self that includes race and ethnicity and career and sexual roles and that, ideally, is reflected back -- validated and approved -- in the words and deeds of friends and associates.

In YouthBuild, resolving "identity versus identity confusion" is the task that becomes most salient near the end of a young person's participation in the program. See the final row of figure 9.2. Identity comprises the "internalized self," the "persona" and the "reputation." The internalized self is all of the beliefs that people have about themselves. The persona is the "performance" through which a person defines him or herself to the world. It influences the reputation. The reputation is identity from the perspective of others. In each of these ways, the successful participant is not the same person who entered the program almost a year earlier. S/he has new skills, new friends, new understandings and faces a new set of opportunities because of what the program has helped him or her to accomplish.

---

[115] Erikson's model has three additional stages, but we do not consider them here. At least two of the three do have some parallel for analyzing the YouthBuild program.

Consider the following list of statements. I am: competent; morally upright; someone whom people respect; a good citizen; and a positive "work in progress." More for some YouthBuild participants than for others, these statements are more accurate descriptions of the internalized self, the persona and the reputation when the trainee reaches the end of the program than when s/he stands at the beginning. Positive experiences during the program support proclivities to be *trustful*, to feel appropriately *autonomous*, to take *initiative* toward new goals and to become *industrious* in their pursuit. If these tendencies are out of line with past inclinations, then it is likely that youth will experience a change not only in their identities but also in the directions of their lives. The stability of these changes will depend on how firmly they have been established and how consistently the social environment supports them once the youth leaves YouthBuild.

I Am Good. I Am Effective.

Seventy-eight of our one-on-one interviews with youth took place in the final month of their participation in the program. We ended each interview with the following question: "If someone asked you to describe yourself, to say who you are, what would you say?" Coding and tabulating the answers from all five demonstration sites produces the following breakdown:

Helpful/caring/loving/I can give advice	37%
Intelligent/trying to learn/hard-working	33%
Nice/friendly/easy to get along with	29%
Honest/direct/sincere	23%
Trying to make something of myself/determined	21%
That's a very hard and/or interesting question.	13%
Fun/carefree/easy-going/like to party	12%
Faith in God	4%
Down-to-earth	4%
Social dexterity/I can fit in	3%
Other	4%

N = 78 respondents; 110 responses, some fit two categories.
(Percentages are responses as percent of respondents.)

This was an open-ended question. The answers were almost totally devoid of references to particular skills or career aspirations. Instead, the emphasis was twofold; trainees felt a sense of control or efficacy and a feeling of moral legitimacy or goodness. These were the two core themes.

In roughly one third of these interviews we followed up by asking what the answer to the same question would have been a year earlier. In some cases, youth said that they were headed in the same direction as their identity statement indicates, but they simply were not as far along. However, in two thirds of the cases where we asked the follow-up question, the answer for a year earlier was distinctly different. The following are abbreviated "now" and "before" statements for eight representative trainees from among those who reported a change. Each of the five sites is represented by at least one of these examples.

Trainee #1:

NOW

> I know where I want to go, what I want to do. I got a heart now, patience. You can come to me for help, advice or for anything. I'm willing to listen to you, good or bad, and be able to give you advice on it.

BEFORE

> I probably would tell you I couldn't give that answer because I would probably be like, "Right now, the way I feel I don't care a fuck about nobody but me. What happens to you I don't give a fuck." Not care. I couldn't help you ... without helping myself.

Trainee #2

NOW

> I'm ready, that is who I am. Now I know, I'm focused.

BEFORE

> I wouldn't be able to tell you anything, to tell you the truth.

Trainee #3

NOW

> I am consistent, ambitious, curious, trying to learn more, hard working.

BEFORE

> I was angry, rebellious, consistent in a negative way, still ambitious though, still knew what he wanted to do just didn't have a chance to do it. A hard-head.

Trainee #4

NOW

> I achieve what I want to achieve. Very stubborn. . . . I usually try and contribute something to the conversation. . . . Very conservative, I give 110% to what I want to do. . . . I tell them, "Nah, I don't think that's right." I might persuade them not to do that.

BEFORE

> Before I came to the program I was like a leaf, I would blow. I would go where the wind would blow me, but something in my head was saying, "No, Don, you really don't want to do that." But because the majority want to go, "Oh, alright. Well, okay. Cool."

Trainee #5

NOW

> I'm a role model to people now. . . . I ain't selling drugs no more. I go to church, sing in the choir. We talked to the young people . . . they started to realize that ain't the way to go . . . I was a friend to a few of the people that are in the program, but now

I got more friends, everybody's my friend, I like everybody . . . I'm just a nice guy.

BEFORE

People looked at me like I was a dope dealer. I used to sell dope ever since I was 15 years old, but I knew I had to change 'cause I didn't want to see that penitentiary. It was a few people here I was a friend with, but right now, I got more friends now.

Trainee #6

NOW

I am a person who has changed his way of thinking and his attitude in the last nine months, keeping in touch of what he has to do but not forgetting where he came from and not forgetting to help those who need the help so they can get what I got. There's more for me to conquer out here. YouthBuild's just this small step in this big world of steps.

BEFORE

I would have said, [name] is a sort of confused Hispanic brother who's struggling right now with the system and now knowing what he really want to do. He doesn't think he's educated. Doesn't have the self-esteem to look past today. And just needs some guidance and some help to get him where he wants to go. I wanted to be an electrician, I still want to be an electrician.

Trainee #7

NOW

I'm shy. But I'm coming out of my shyness . . . I can't even drink no wine or alcohol, nothing like that, it's a long process. . . . Don't get down on myself and keep up my faith in myself, just believe that I am somebody. Being clean and sober, that's powerful enough for me, that's really powerful stuff. I try not to get too confident.

BEFORE

I didn't want to ask nobody for nothing, especially help for a problem I was having, hell no. Before this, something I couldn't do like in school, I wouldn't tell nobody, man. I either don't do it or keep trying but I wouldn't go ask for no help. . . I didn't think I was an addict or nothing like that, which I am. I consider myself an alcoholic. . .

Trainee #8

NOW

I'm intelligent, outgoing, easy to get along with.

BEFORE

Hard to get along with. An attitude problem. But I wanted something better for me and my son, I don't want him coming up like that, in that environment that I came up in and doing the stuff that I did.

These "before" profiles report anger, drug dealing, lack of control and feelings of inferiority. Many youth whose profiles from before the program would be similar to those listed above dropped out or were asked to leave before the end of the program cycle. Hence, these changes are not inevitable. Nevertheless, changes in trustfulness, autonomy, initiative and industriousness -- the first four tasks in the Erikson framework -- are clearly apparent for these young people.

As the tabulations show, regardless of whether they completed their GEDs or received any particular certificate for the achievement of new skills, the youth in our interviews report that they are both more efficacious and more morally upright than they were a year earlier. Unfortunately, we do not know how sustainable these gains are after the program ends. The answer depends on what happens in other settings, such as the new work place. In each new context, youth must negotiate social relations through a progression of tasks analogous to those that this chapter has addressed for YouthBuild.[116]

I Am Who I Expect to Become

Again, the identity statements tabulated above seldom mentioned specific skills, career aspirations or achievements such as the GED. Nevertheless, skills and achievements clearly affect the sense of optimism that trainees have at the end of the program, and expectations regarding future careers are clearly aspects of their identities. Most trainees interviewed in the final weeks of the program cycle were able to articulate an image of who they expected to become. For example,

#1: Basically, me I'm looking forward to just being a carpenter, man. Establishing

---

[116] Recent research paints a bleak picture regarding what is likely to happen to young men after they leave YouthBuild. Even though they have changed, challenges await them. Stereotypes of young black males pose significant barriers to respectful treatment and employment opportunity. On the negative messages that young black males receive, see: Ferguson and Jackson, 1994. On employers' stereotypes see of young black and Hispanic males in Chicago see: Kirschenman and Neckerman, 1990. For an overview of earnings and employment trends for black males and associated explanations see: Ferguson, 1995.

> myself to a certain position to where I've made a lot of money and I've got a lot of money in the bank. What I'm going to do, I'm going to fix up a house man, and when I'm not working I can do that shit myself. And if push come to shove I can always sell that house.
>
> #2: [I'll pay my dues working outside first, but] I don't see myself outside [for a career]. I want to work in someone's office, probably giving contracts and so forth for whatever the company is that I work for. That's what I want to do. ... I don't want to work outside. I want to be inside with the heat and other people. ... Be someone's estimator or something at some construction company.
>
> #3: I wasn't even planning on going to college, you know, just get my GED, learn some construction, get a job. . . . I scored high on my GED so they said, "Well, you can go to college if you want." And they're hooking me up now, we're sending out applications right now.

Each of these young people has a reasonably clear and positive mental image of the future. Programs in three of the five cities did a much better job than the other two in helping students to formulate plans for life after YouthBuild. The two weaker sites produced students whose plans lacked specificity even when they felt generally that YouthBuild was a positive experience.

Also, sites differed in their success at placing students in jobs. Explanations given for the differences included differences in local economic conditions, in the job readiness of trainees and in the availability of staff resources to do job placement. Whatever the relative importance of these and other factors, students clearly felt let down at sites where placement rates were low.[117]

What the GED Means for Identity

Many youth do not complete the GED before the program ends. Only two of ten site-years in the demonstration achieved GEDs by the end of the program for half or more of the high school dropouts who received positive terminations.[118] Failing to complete the process can be discouraging. The following young man attended the weakest site in the demonstration project and almost certainly did not receive proper counseling:

---

[117] A companion paper provides evidence that job placements affected trainees' judgments about whether the program lived up to its promises. Job placements also affected relationships with parents, particularly fathers. Youth who got jobs at the end of the program were statistically significantly more likely to report that their fathers respected them more because of their participation in YouthBuild.

> Trainee: Things didn't work out the way you planned it, you start getting disappointed. It's towards the end of the year, you're right back where you started from.
>
> Interviewer: Before, when you came into the program, where did you hope you'd be right now?
>
> Trainee: Right now, on this day? I knew it was going to take some time. I hoped within four or five months I'd have my GED, though, and start on a job within four to six months.
>
> It's not exactly all their fault either. Personally I knew, it's people like me, I came here with no credits at all. I didn't really go to high school. . . . I have no other options but the GED.
>
> Are my skills sharp enough to pass the test? Well, right now, honestly, no, I don't expect to pass it right off the bat, no I don't. What I plan on doing though is taking it and seeing where I really need to work on it, sharpen my skills in that area, then take it. And I don't expect to pass it the first time I take it. I already know it, I don't expect to. I would like to, but I don't expect that. And there's a lot of stuff I don't know. Like I said, I only went as far as the ninth grade.

While he tries to be positive, he is not very optimistic. His hopes had been high, but now he feels that he is, "right back where you started from." The fact that he feels this way does not reflect well on the counseling and instruction that he received at this particular site.

This site did little or no admissions screening for preparedness and was in relative disarray for a substantial period during the program cycle. Moreover, this is the one YouthBuild site that awards mostly high school degrees. Since the high school degree would have required several more years for him and his site was not focused on the GED, one can ask whether he should ever have been admitted. Ideally, he should find his way to additional assistance with GED preparation, but there is no evidence in the interview that he has been counseled to do so.

---

[118] The phrase "positive termination" simply means that the youth was not expelled from the program. Most youth with positive terminations lasted through the entire program cycle; some left early to enter school or work.

Among youth at other sites who stayed through the program cycle but left without the GED, most had received a substantial amount of GED preparation. Many had passed some but not all of the sub-tests, and most with whom we spoke seemed more optimistic than the young man above about their ability to eventually earn the GED certificate. The following young man was nearing the end of the program cycle, but expected that he would complete the GED eventually:

> Like me, I wasn't never really dumb. To tell you the truth, I should have been way through my GED test, I'm mad at myself that I didn't. I was scared 'cause I thought it was going to be hard as hell. That's real. But now, every individual that come through the program, they're strong. And, if they come to school, they're going to learn 'cause of the teachers.

Our project was not equipped to track participants to see how many actually completed the GED after the program ended. We would expect mixed results. Without special arrangements, YouthBuild programs cannot offer sustained instruction and social support to outgoing cohorts as they bring in new trainees. If the promise of GEDs is to be real for the majority, then either the first year of GED instruction needs to produce GEDs more rapidly or organized support during a second year needs to be provided.

When YouthBuild participants achieve the GED it represents a major milestone in their lives. It affects the internalized self, the persona and the reputation. Many regard earning the GED to be the first conventional goal that they have ever achieved as the result of sustained effort. It shows that effort pays. Often, it proves to them that they are smarter than they thought they were. In addition, no matter what the reasons were that they dropped out of school, they now have closure on their secondary education. It feels good say one trainee:

> They make assertions you can get your GED, so you can actually say you have a high school diploma. That feels good. To tell you the truth, I think that would motivate any young dope dealer now, if they could actually go to school and get their GED and say they've accomplished something. Something's been accomplished, man. I haven't accomplished nothing in my life, that's the first thing I've ever accomplished in my life, is my GED, man. And it took me twenty-one years to get it. Three years extra. So I feel fucking good. I ain't never givin this shit up for nothing in my life. I ain't never felt like this!

Another says:

> Trainee: When I finally got it me and my mom cried together. Yeah, 'cause she knew how much I'd been working on it. . . . It was my first time taking it. . . . I didn't go to take the test intimidated. When I went to take the test I felt good about myself. I felt good about what I learned and what I know. And I owe a lot of that to the teachers at YouthBuild.
>
> Interviewer: Do you think you did anything different when you were in YouthBuild than you did in public schools?
>
> Trainee: I know I did something different. 'Cause it felt different. I felt different. I was more anxious to learn. But I've always been anxious to learn. It's just no one has been willing to give me the amount of knowledge that YouthBuild gave me so I put extra energy into it.

Still another says:

> Trainee: My getting my G.E.D. is my most important memory. That means a lot to me. I'm glad I finally got it.
>
> Interviewer: Why do you think your mom cried when you got it?
>
> Trainee: 'Cause she didn't have a chance to get hers. She didn't have a chance to graduate from high school and neither did any of my family besides me and my other cousin. She got her diploma. I got my G.E.D. So, it was good. You know she cried for me 'cause I was her first kid to get a G.E.D. Memorable for me because I had fun preparing for it.

Once students have their GEDs, they can look ahead with greater anticipation:

> Okay, before the program I felt, to tell you the truth, I was living in imaginary world. 'Cause I wasn't actually setting out to do it. I was just saying, "Okay, this is what I'm going to do. This is what I'm going to do. This is what I'm going to do." But without a GED I couldn't even did the first thing and that was go to school. Now that I have my GED, now I'm actually in the process.

CONCLUSION

Young people may arrive at YouthBuild plagued by feelings of mistrust, shame and doubt, guilt and inferiority because of rotten experiences during the early years of life. Others may have more positive feelings, but still need assistance because they have few skills and social supports that are of value in mainstream institutions. What participants have in common is that they need assistance making healthy and hopeful transitions from adolescence into early adulthood.

The most successful sites of the YouthBuild program strive to select youth who, whatever their prior histories, are truly ready to put their lives on the right track. These sites hire staff whose primary mission is to reclaim youth from the margins of mainstream society and to move them toward the center. Ideally, the program then guides youth through a series of developmental tasks to cultivate competencies and orientations that will improve the quality of their lives and enhance their potential contributions to society. When they succeed, youth leave the program with healthier identities -- more positive internalized selves, more conventionally mature personas and gradually improving reputations among family and friends.

Young people arrive at YouthBuild uncertain that they can trust the program to be any better than the schools and other programs that, they believe, have already failed them. Those who experience the most success in YouthBuild learn to trust the staff, to respect the rules and to select practical goals for achievement. Sometimes, fully engaging the program requires overcoming feelings of survivor's guilt and social isolation from unsupportive friends. Ideally, once feelings of ambivalence wane and goals become clear, youth work industriously toward the goals that they have selected. Finally, they consolidate a positive and healthy sense of themselves that is the foundation of a new hopefulness about the future. This is the ideal picture. Sometimes it comes true.

Youth who experience more difficulty stumble on many types of obstacles: unsupportive home and community environments; inappropriate actions by program staff; or the student's own lack of readiness. The lack of readiness comes typically from the fact that the young people have not decided with resolve that they want to change. Often, they may be too attached to their current life style, too unsure of themselves or too skeptical that YouthBuild is "for real." This skepticism is not irrational. Past experiences with public schools and in other programs that have failed to deliver what they promised have taught youth to be mistrustful and pessimistic.

Nevertheless, when youth are ready to change and the YouthBuild model is implemented well it appears to have the components and qualities that youth need to point their lives in positive directions. Counselors are available to help solve problems and to assist in the development of good judgement, the leadership component emphasizes personal responsibility and gives youth a voice in program governance, a climate of mutual respect between students and staff prevails, instruction is offered to equip youth with basic skills and employability training that the marketplace will value, and placement in a job or help with college applications is available to those who complete the program.

In the sites that we studied, the quality of implementation ranged from quite high to poor. However, nothing about the YouthBuild model is so difficult or so mysterious that implementation at a high standard of quality should not become the norm.[119] YouthBuild USA has a vital role to play as an intermediary and technical assistance agent in making high quality the standard. Through the demonstration project upon which this report reports and through other efforts, YouthBuild USA is assembling a knowledge base that can help sites across the nation to emulate what others have found effective and to avoid proven mistakes. As YouthBuild organizations grow in proficiency, the greater should be the number of young men who, upon completion of the program, can make statements like the following:

---

[119] This assumes that salaries are sufficient to prevent excessive staff turnover. Turnover was an important problem at only one of the sites we studied.

> Well...my family thinks it's a great idea. They think it's something real positive that I've done for myself and for the community. I think it's something that has taught them that I could do the right thing. For once in my life I finished something that I started. I'm reaching a lot of new goals. And, when my mother found out I was going to college she started crying. Because I was out there. I was gone. When I was out in the streets I was gone. I was deep in there. I was either going to jail, kill somebody or kill myself. And you know I didn't care about no one. I didn't care about nobody, not even my mother. I used to steal from her, man. I used to do a lot of crazy shit. And for me to change my life the way I have is something really significant to her. And she looks at me now and she's knows I'm responsible. She knows that she can depend on me.

For this young man, YouthBuild provided a moratorium in they same way that Erikson describes adolescence as providing a moratorium for young people in general. For Erikson, the psychosocial moratorium provided by adolescence allows the individual time to prepare for adulthood.

> A moratorium is a period of delay, granted to somebody who is not ready to meet obligation or forced upon somebody who should give himself time to do so. Here I mean a delay of adult commitments, and yet not only a delay. I mean a period that is characterized by a selective permissiveness on the part of society and of provocative playfulness on the part of youth; and yet also a period of deep (if often transitory) commitment on the part of youth and ceremonial acceptance of commitment on the part of society.[120]

Programs such as YouthBuild play a similar role for their participants, who, at the outset of the program, are not prepared to participate in conventional society as adults. If all goes well as they go through the program, they develop new understandings of themselves and their environments, resolve issues that have undermined their ability to assume adult responsibilities and leave the programs having integrated these changes into new identities that enable them to play positive and productive roles in their communities.

---

[120] Quoted in Maier, 1965.

REFERENCES FOR CHAPTER 9

Crichlow, Warren, 1992. *A Social Analysis of Black Youth Commitment and Disaffection in an Urban High School*. Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Rochester, Graduate School of Education and Human Development.

Dweck, Carol, 1991. "Self-Theories and Goals: Their Role in Motivation, Personality and Development." In *Nebraska Symposium on Motivation, 1990*, R. A. Dienstbier, ed. (Lincoln, Nebraska: Lincoln University Press, 1991)

Dweck, Carol Dweck and Ellen L. Leggett, 1988. "A Social Cognitive Approach to Motivation and Personality." *Psychological Review*. Vol. 95, No. 2, pp. 256-73.

Erikson, Erik H., 1963, *Childhood and Society* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1963), Chapter 7.

Ferguson, Ronald F. and Jason C. Snipes, 1994. "The Outcomes of Mentoring: Healthier Identities for Youth," *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Problems*. Vol. 3, No. 2. Summer.

Ferguson, Ronald F., 1994. "How Professionals in Community Based Programs Perceive and Respond to the Needs of Black Male Youth." In Ronald B. Mincy, ed., *Nurturing Black Male Youth* (Washington DC: Urban Institute Press).

Ferguson, Ronald F. and Mary S. Jackson, 1994. "Black Male Youth and Drugs: How Racial Prejudice, Parents and Peers Affect Vulnerability," in Peter J. Venturelli, ed., *Drug Use in America: Social, Cultural and Political Perspectives* (Boston: Jones and Bartlett).

Ferguson, Ronald F., 1995. "Shifting Challenges: Fifty Years of Economic Change Toward Black-White Earnings Equality." *Daedalus*. Winter 1995, Vol. 124, No. 1.

Fox, Jerry R., 1985. "Mission Impossible? Social Work Practice with Black Urban Youth Gangs." *Social Work*. January-February.

Garber, Judy and Martin E. P. Seligman, eds., 1980. *Human Helplessness Theory and Applications* (New York: Academic Press).

Kirschenman, Joleen and Kathryn M. Neckerman, "'We'd Like to Hire Them, But ...': The Meaning of Race for Employers," in Christopher Jencks and Paul E. Peterson, eds., *The Urban Underclass* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution, 1991).

Maier, Henry W., 1965. *Three Theories of Child Development* ([find publisher]), p. 58.

National Research Council, *Losing Generations: Adolescents in High-Risk Settings* (Washington DC: National Academy Press, 1993). Chapter 7.

Ogbu, John U., 1978. *Minority Education and Caste: The American System in Cross-Cultural Perspective* (New York: Academic Press).

Skinner, Ellen A., James G. Wellborn and James P. Connell, 1990. "What it Takes to Do Well in School and Whether I've Got It: A Process Model of Perceived Control and Children's Engagement and Achievement in School." *Journal of Educational Psychology*, Vol. 82, No. 1., pp. 22-32.

CHAPTER 10

QUANTITATIVE EVIDENCE ON ENGAGEMENT AND TRANSFORMATION FOR YOUTHBUILD GRADUATES

INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter uses a framework adapted mostly from the work of Erik Erikson, integrated with quotations from interviews with staff and participants, to illustrate processes by which trainees in YouthBuild achieve various degrees of personal growth. The present chapter continues with the same conceptual framework but uses statistical instead of qualitative analysis. Generally, the findings in this chapter support the story of development that the previous chapter developed.

The chapter has several purposes. The first is to present results from a survey introduced in the second year of the demonstration project to solicit judgments from YouthBuild graduates about the quality of the program and about their personal growth. Graduates from four program cycles completed survey. Some of the results from the survey appear in the body of the chapter and a full tabulation of the survey is included as Appendix 10C. In general, graduates who completed the survey give the program positive reviews.

The second purpose of the chapter is to show the degree to which YouthBuild graduates achieved statistically significant progress on several measures of personal development. Focal dimensions of development include changes in routines of time management, proclivities toward leadership, achievement of the general equivalency diploma (GED), concern for children and the frequency of involvement with illicit drugs, crime and other forms of dishonesty. The findings show that YouthBuild graduates in the sample achieve statistically significant progress on all but one of the indices that the chapter examines.[121]

The third purpose of the chapter is to discuss correlations between staff-youth relationship ratings and measures of social and developmental engagement. The measures of engagement derive from trainees' responses to particular items on the end-of-program survey.[122] We find that staff-youth relationship ratings from the early months of the program are correlated with the measure of social engagement from the end of the program but not with the measure of developmental engagement. However, staff-youth relationship ratings from later in the program are correlated with both social and developmental engagement from the end of the program. The results are consistent with a hypothesis that follows from the framework in chapter 9. Specifically, participants become socially engaged before they become developmentally engaged -- social engagement appears to develop first, as the foundation for more developmental forms of engagement that may follow.

Fourth, the chapter uses the two measures of engagement to predict the progress that trainees achieve. The general finding is that developmental engagement is much more important than social engagement for predicting the amount of development a participant achieves in YouthBuild. Friendly relations between staff and youth are necessary but not sufficient for achieving high levels of youth development. In addition to *liking* the staff, participants need to learn to *use* the staff. Staff members who make themselves productive and "user friendly" for both social and more difficult developmental purposes are likely to be the most effective at producing youth development.

---

[121] For that one, called "ethics, drugs and crime," the lack of progress for graduates was primarily because they rated rather well even at the base-line; participants who rated poorly at the base-line on "ethics, drugs and crime" tended not to achieve positive terminations. The index measures ethics, drugs and criminal behavior for the *months immediately before entry into YouthBuild*. Many graduates had criminal histories, but their behaviors immediately before the program were generally good.

[122] By definition, to "engage" is to focus one's attention and effort. Here, *social* engagement involves focusing attention and effort on establishing and maintaining trusting relationships with staff members and peers. Conversely, *developmental* engagement concentrates attention and effort on learning and personal growth beyond the formation of relationships.

Three appendices to this chapter supplement the main text. Appendix 10A provides details about the data. Appendix 10B presents a supplementary statistical analysis that explores relationships between participants' judgments of program quality, their reports concerning which aspects of the program were personally most important and the development that they achieved during the program. Finally, Appendix 10C includes a complete pooled tabulation of responses to the survey that trainees answered at the end of the second cycle.

MEASURES OF YOUTH TRANSFORMATION

The indices that this section of the chapter introduces are measured at the beginning and at the end of the program for YouthBuild graduates at the demonstration sites. Changes from the base line to the end of the program indicate degrees to which graduates acquired the perceptions, values and behaviors that YouthBuild's components and qualities are geared to foster. For example, changes in the index for time management bear on work readiness. Changes in the index for leadership proclivity indicate new levels of interest in civic affairs and leadership. Changes in the index for ethics, drugs and crime pertain to values and behaviors that underpin good citizenship. Changes in the index "caring for children" indicate the degree to which participants are more prepared to nurture and set good examples for their own and others' children.

The data come from base-line surveys and from surveys administered to YouthBuild graduates during the final week of the second year of the demonstration.[123] Site-years included are the second cycles at Boston, San Francisco and Gary and the first cycle for

---

[123] Sixty one of the 64 trainees who completed the end-of-program survey received positive terminations and were considered to be graduates of the program.

Gary.[124] Hence, the data cover four site-years. Cleveland and Tallahassee had trouble scheduling the survey at the end of the program and are not represented in this chapter. See Appendix 10A for details regarding the sample.

Table 10.1 summarizes participants' answers to some of the questions in the survey from the end of the program. (See Appendix 10C for the complete summary.) Numbers in the table suggest that trainees feel more optimistic, more confident and more responsible, and perceive that other people believe in them more than before. Roughly 70 percent report that "what's next" for them is a job, sometimes in combination with school or public service, and 53 percent report that they already have jobs lined up. All in all, the table shows a generally favorable set of responses.

Nevertheless, instead of relying on variables such as those in Table 10.1 to measure progress, the analysis below constructs indices from items that appear first on the base-line survey and again at the end of the program. Four such indices, defined in the pages that follow, are "leadership proclivity," "time management," "ethics, drugs and crime" and "care for children."[125] Along with achievement of the GED, changes in these

---

[124] Gary's first cycle coincided with the second cycle for the others and its second cycle extended a year later.

[125] Each of these indices is defined and summarized in the text that follows. This footnote presents values for Cronbach's alpha, a statistic that measures the reliability of an index, associated with the degree to which the items in the index are related to one another. Values of Cronbach's alpha for the indices here are the following, with base-line values listed first and the end-of-program values second: LEADERSHIP PROCLIVITY (0.74, 0.70); TIME MANAGEMENT (0.77, 0.74); ETHICS, DRUGS AND CRIME (0.71, 0.76); CARE FOR CHILDREN (0.69, 0.72). These values are within the conventionally acceptable range for indices that are not going to be used as the basis for important decisions about individuals based on their particular values of the index. For the latter purposes, more refined indices than these, with alphas of 0.90 and above, are more appropriate. Eventually, more refined versions of the indices that this chapter uses, developed in future research, should indeed have higher values.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Table 10.1

Assessments of Personal Progress from the End-of-Program Survey of YouthBuild Graduates

(Numbers Are Percentages of Total Responses, N=64, Four Site-Years Pooled)

How much better do you think your future will be because of YouthBuild?

Much Better	A Little Better	The Same
60.94	37.50	1.56

Because of YouthBuild,	Yes	Maybe	No
do you expect to earn a better living?	77.78	22.22	0.00
do you now THINK more before you act?	50.79	49.21	0.00
do you feel more confident?	53.97	44.44	1.59

Because of YouthBuild, do you take:	Yes, a Lot	Yes, Some	No
more responsibility for yourself?	66.13	33.87	0.00
more responsibility in your community?	38.33	61.67	0.00
more responsibility for your children? (if you have children)	77.27	9.09	13.64

Do you think that people believe in you more now because of YouthBuild?

	Yes	Maybe	No
Mother?	74.58	20.34	5.08
Father?	67.92	24.53	7.55
Girlfriend or boyfriend?	67.74	24.19	8.06
Other people?	52.46	43.62	4.92

Now that you are out of YouthBuild, what is the next step for you?

Percentages (total=100): Work 47.27; Work and School 20.00; Work and Public Service 1.82; School 23.64; School and Public Service 1.82; Public Service 1.82; Other 3.64.

How much do you know about how to succeed at this?

More than Enough	Enough	Almost Enough	Not Nearly Enough
27.87	49.19	21.31	1.64

continued next page.

Table 10.1, continued

How helpful was the staff in teaching you what you needed to know?

Very Helpful	Sort of Helpful	A Little Helpful	Not Helpful
59.02	36.07	4.92	0.00

Do you already have a job to go to after YouthBuild?	Yes:	53.23	No:	46.77
If yes, did YouthBuild help you find this job?	Yes:	84.84	No:	15.14

indices between the beginning and the end of the program are key measures of youth development.[126] If the program is effective, this study should find positive and statistically significant changes in these indices. Moreover, if our conceptual framework is appropriate, our statistical analysis in a later section should tend to confirm the chapter's central hypotheses regarding differences among trainees in levels of progress.

Leadership Proclivity

In YouthBuild, "leadership" means "taking responsibility for making things go right" in four domains: for one's self, for the program, in one's family, and in the civic community. Here, an index called leadership proclivity pertains to civic participation. Panel A of Table 10.2 summarizes trainees' responses for each of its components. Numbers in the table appear in pairs -- one above the other. The top number in each pair is the percentage of respondents at the end of the program who chose the answer listed at top of the column. The bottom number is the percentage of the exact same respondents

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

---

[126] Each index has both a base-line and an end-of-program value. Each item in the base-line index is scaled to have a mean of zero and a standard deviation of 1. To form the index, the standardized items are summed and the sum is divided by the number of items. The end-of-program index is similar, but each component of the index is standardized not using its own mean and standard deviation, but instead using the mean and standard deviation from the corresponding base-line item. Hence, the base-line and end-of-program values are in the same units (i.e., base-line standard deviations) and measured relative to the same zero value (i.e., the base-line mean).

Table 10.2

Components of Youth Development Indices for YouthBuild Graduates

Top Line in Each Pair of Numbers Is End-of-Program
Bottom Line is Base-Line

Panel A: LEADERSHIP PROCLIVITY

In the past few months, how often did you:

	Doesn't Apply to Me	Almost Never	Once or Twice a Month	Once or Twice a Week	Almost Every day
Participate in comm. organizations or do volunteer work?	8.33	14.58	35.42	25.00	16.67
	33.33	35.42	22.92	4.17	4.17

Five years from now, how likely is it that you will:

	I Have Not Thought About It	Not Likely	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely
Vote regularly?	2.08	4.17	18.75	75.00
	6.25	10.42	22.92	60.42
Play a positive role in your community?	0.00	2.08	20.83	77.08
	8.33	10.42	22.92	58.33
Participate in organizations?	2.17	17.39	34.78	45.65
	4.35	17.39	30.43	47.83
Be politically active?	4.00	38.00	34.00	24.00
	18.00	24.00	30.00	28.00
Want to be a leader in your community?	2.08	14.58	35.42	47.92
	6.25	20.83	31.25	41.67

Panel B: TIME MANAGEMENT (continued next page)

In the past few months, about how many hours per day did you usually spend:

	None or Almost None	One	Two or Three	Four or Five	Six or More
Hanging out?	28.26	26.09	39.13	2.17	4.35
	19.57	8.70	23.91	15.22	32.61

In the past few months, how often did you:

	Doesn't Apply to Me	Almost Never	Once or Twice a Month	Once or Twice a Week	Almost Every day
Stay up past 2 am?	21.28	31.91	23.40	19.15	4.26
	19.15	12.77	21.28	29.79	17.02
Keep to a schedule for sleeping and waking?	4.17	8.33	8.33	27.08	52.08
	8.33	29.17	10.42	16.67	35.42

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Table 10.2, Continued.

Panel B: TIME MANAGEMENT (continued)

Hang out with friends past midnight?	18.75	33.33	20.83	25.00	2.08
	18.75	16.67	18.75	22.92	22.92
Hang out with friends during the day?	14.89	27.66	23.40	25.53	8.51
	14.89	6.38	17.02	27.66	34.04

Panel C: CARE FOR CHILDREN

In the past few months, how often did you:

	Doesn't Apply to Me	Almost Never	Once or Twice a Month	Once or Twice a Week	Almost Every day
Spend time with your child?	34.04	0.00	2.13	17.02	46.81
	46.81	0.00	2.13	10.64	40.43
Try to set a good example for a child?	4.26	0.00	6.38	19.15	70.21
	8.51	6.38	10.64	21.28	53.19
Baby sit?	36.17	8.51	8.51	27.66	19.15
	34.04	10.64	23.40	10.64	21.28

Panel D: ETHICS, DRUGS & CRIME

In the past few months, how often did you:

	Doesn't Apply to Me	Almost Never	Once or Twice a Month	Once or Twice a Week	Almost Every day
Drink beer or wine?	43.75	20.83	16.67	16.67	2.08
	37.50	6.25	25.00	14.58	16.67
Follow friends into trouble?	50.00	41.30	6.52	2.17	0.00
	52.17	26.09	4.35	6.52	10.87
Use marijuana?	62.50	16.67	10.42	6.25	4.17
	62.50	12.50	12.50	6.25	6.25
Break the law for money?	60.42	29.17	4.17	0.00	6.25
	77.08	6.25	6.25	2.08	8.33
Break a promise?	23.91	50.00	15.22	8.70	2.17
	32.61	39.13	19.57	6.52	2.17
Drink hard liquor?	60.42	20.83	14.58	4.17	0.00
	62.50	14.58	12.50	2.08	8.33
Use hard drugs?	76.60	14.89	2.13	6.38	0.00
	80.85	10.64	8.51	0.00	0.00

who gave that answer at the beginning of the program.[127]

For example, the first question asks, "In the past few months, how often did you participate in community organizations or do volunteer work?" The percentage answering "Once or twice a week" rises from 4.17 percent at the base line to 25.00 percent at the end of the program. "Almost every day" is the response for 16.67 percent at the end of the program, up from 4.17 percent at the base line. Much of this recent participation is organized through YouthBuild; only a portion is organized by the participants themselves. Even so, for the two categories together, the change from 8.34 percent at the base line to 41.67 percent at the end of the program is noteworthy.

The other five items in the index for leadership proclivity are responses to the question, "Five years from now, how likely is it that you will: ..." Three quarters of respondents answered that they would be very likely to vote regularly by the end of the program, compared with 60.42 percent at the base line. Similarly, for "play a positive role in your community," the percent answering "very likely" rises from 58.33 percent at the base line to 77.08 percent at the end. Net changes for the other three items are smaller: even at the base line, more than half of respondents had answered at least "somewhat likely" for each.

Table 10.3 supplements Table 10.2. It tabulates patterns of statistical significance. The first column shows whether trainees who completed the end-of-program survey made progress relative to their own base-line levels. The second column shows whether differences existed on the base-line survey between the trainees who completed the program and their peers who failed to finish. Each cluster of plus "+" signs indicates a

---

[127] This table show only the beginning and final distribution among categories; while the majority improves, some trainees have lower ending than base-line values.

Table 10.3

TESTS FOR DIFFERENCES IN LEADERSHIP PROCLIVITY, TIME MANAGEMENT, CARE FOR CHILDREN, and ETHICS, DRUGS & CRIME

(For the Four Site Years that Completed End-of-Program Surveys)

	End of Program vs Base Line, for Graduates	Graduates vs Dropouts Base-Line Differences
Panel A: LEADERSHIP PROCLIVITY		
In the past few months, how often did you:		
Participate in community organizations or do volunteer work?	++++	ns
Five years from now, how likely is it that you will:		
Vote regularly?	+	ns
Play a positive role in your community?	+++	ns
Participate in organizations?	ns	ns
Be politically active?	ns	ns
Want to be a leader in your community?	+	ns
Composite:	++++	ns
Panel B: TIME MANAGEMENT		
In the past few months, about how many hours per day did you usually spend:		
Hanging out?	++++	ns
In the past few months, how often did you:		
Stay up past 2 am?	+++	ns
Keep to a schedule for sleeping and waking?	+++	ns

Significance Levels: ns = over .13; + = .06 to .13; ++ = .02 to .059; +++ = .0011 to .019; ++++ = .001 and below.

Table 10.3, Continued.

Panel B: TIME MANAGEMENT (continued)

Hang out with friends past midnight?	+++	ns
Hang out with friends during the day?	+++	ns
Composite:	++++	ns

	End of Program vs Base Line, for Finishers	Positive vs Negative Terminations, Base-Line Differences
Panel C: CARE FOR CHILDREN		
In the past few months, how often did you:		
Spend time spent with your child?	+	ns
Try to set a good example for a child?	++	+
Baby sit	ns	++
Composite:	++	++
Panel D: ETHICS, DRUGS & CRIME		
In the past few months, how often did you:		
Drink beer and wine?	+++	ns
Follow friends into trouble?	+	ns
Use marijuana?	ns	+
Break the law for money?	ns	+
Break a promise?	ns	++
Drink hard liquor?	ns	ns
Use hard drugs?	ns	ns
Composite:	ns	++

Significance Levels: ns = over .13; + = .06 to .13; ++ = .02 to .059; +++ = .0011 to .019; ++++ = .001 and below.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

level of statistical significance. The note at the bottom of the table lists the corresponding significance levels. An "ns" means that the difference is not statistically distinguishable from zero. A single plus sign means that the difference is marginally distinguishable from zero. At the other extreme, four plus signs indicate the most statistically significant differences.

None of the items in the index for leadership proclivity exhibits a statistically significant difference at the base line between YouthBuild's graduates and non-graduates. In contrast, four of the six items in the index show at least a marginally significant change from the graduates' own base-line answers. Similarly, the composite index shows no difference at the base line between dropouts and graduates, but by the end of the program, graduates had achieved a highly statistically significant gain relative to their own base-line values. Apparently, YouthBuild raises proclivities toward leadership.

Time Management

The second index is time management. Items in the index include "keeping to a schedule for sleeping and waking," three separate items for "hanging out," and staying up past 2 o'clock in the morning. Keeping to a schedule for sleeping and waking enters the index with a positive sign, the others enter with negative signs since, by conventional mainstream standards, less of these is better.

Numbers in Panel B of Table 10.2 show substantial changes in time management from the base line to the end of the program. Table 10.3 shows that the differences are all statistically significant. Conversely, none of the items in this category (including the composite) exhibit significant differences at the base line between future graduates and non-graduates. Indeed, neither time management nor leadership proclivity at the beginning of the program is a signal of who will graduate from YouthBuild and who will not. Each, however, is a dimension on which the average trainee who lasts until graduation achieves statistically significant growth.

Ethics, Drugs and Crime

The third index is ethics, drugs and crime. Each item in the index enters it with a negative sign. Hence, higher values of the index correspond to better behavior. For YouthBuild graduates, table 10.2 shows reductions in drinking beer and wine and less following friends into trouble at the end of the program than at the beginning. The change regarding following friends into trouble is marginally significant, while that for beer and wine is highly significant. Conversely, the other five items in the index show either no change or slight deterioration in behavior; none are statistically significant. Hence, the picture is mixed and the change in the composite index is not statistically distinguishable from zero.

Given that time management and leadership proclivity improve during the program, it may seem surprising that the index ethics, drugs and crime does not. The explanation is that participants who have the worst base-line values for this index tended to drop from the program and therefore are seldom among the graduates. These young people are typically not "ready" for YouthBuild -- they remain too embroiled in life styles that are incompatible with steady participation in the program.

Considering these results for ethics, drugs and crime together with findings above for time management and leadership proclivity, suggests that YouthBuild does best with participants who are "ready" for the program. It helps them to organize their lives (time management) and to develop more of a positive role in their communities (leadership proclivity). It does not, however, change the bad behaviors of youth who are not ready to discontinue entanglements with drugs, crime and dishonesty.

Care for Children

The final index in this series is "care for children." People who score higher at the base line on care for children are more likely to graduate from the program *and* to improve in this category by the end of the program. Some of the change from the base line occurs because more trainees become parents (note the decrease in "Doesn't Apply to Me," for "Spend time with *your* child"), but statistically significant improvements also occur for "Try to set a good example for a child." Indeed, the number who try to set good examples "almost everyday" grows from 53 percent at the base line to 70 percent by the end of the program -- 90 percent (sum the last two columns) report that they do so at least once a week.

Care for children plays no role in the remainder of the paper. Generally, variation among trainees in the index care for children appears to be unrelated to the measures that we explore as predictors of the other indices. The analysis not shown here produced little of interest to say about it other than the tabulations in tables 10.2 and 10.3.

Each of the four indices introduced in the past few pages pertains to performance at the four site-years that completed both base-line and end-of-program surveys. Calculations not shown here demonstrate that there is no statistically significant difference among the four site-years in the personal growth that their graduates achieve, once one controls for base-line differences in the indices.[128] In addition, a YouthBuild graduate's *ex-ante* likelihood of positive termination and of GED completion, estimated in another part of this report, are not statistically significant predictors of his or her personal growth for the four indices reported above.

---

[128] This appears to be due in part to the small sample sizes for at least two of the site-years. Larger sample sizes in future studies may show that trainees at different sites do indeed achieve different amounts of progress.

To summarize this section, it appears that YouthBuild does not cure bad behavior, except for reductions in following friends into trouble and drinking beer and wine. Conversely, the evidence is statistically significant that participants who last long enough to graduate from YouthBuild emerge on average with more organized lives (time management), greater interest in civic participation and leadership (leadership proclivity) and with more caring and responsible orientations toward children (care for children).

Now that each of the indices has been introduced and the patterns summarized, the next challenge is to understand more about why some YouthBuild graduates achieve more growth during the program than others.[129] Even for ethics, drugs and crime, some trainees do better by the end of the program and some do worse (with no net change for the average).

This next section develops indices of social and developmental engagement and uses them to test hypotheses concerning changes in time management, leadership proclivity, ethics, drugs and crime and GED completion.

RELATIONSHIPS, ENGAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Chapter 9 explained how and why the evolving quality of relationships between participants and staff members are at the core of the developmental process by which YouthBuild helps participants to achieve personal gains. For the first few months of the program, participants tend to be preoccupied with establishing relationships, learning which staff members and which peers can be trusted for what purposes, testing to discover which rules are serious and which are not and deciding how achieve a balance between personal autonomy and the authority of the program. Ideally, these initial months are the period when social engagement deepens and forms the basis for what follows.

---

[129] Note that other chapters here include detailed analyses, for the ten site-years pooled, distinguishing participants who earn positive terminations from those who do not. Similar analyses cover predictors of GED completion.

Gradually, longer-term developmental goals should come more sharply into focus. Developmental engagement toward mastering the knowledge and skills necessary for achieving those goals should grow. However, if a trainee does not trust that a particular staff member is concerned, competent, dependable, respectful and fair, that trainee will be less inclined to use the staff member for developmental assistance. Hence, both social and developmental engagement depend fundamentally on participants' relationships with staff members. Social engagement has much to do with *liking* the staff, while developmental engagement has much to do with *using* the staff in ways that have long-term consequences. Interviews, our conceptual framework and common sense suggest that social engagement is the foundation for developmental engagement because participants will not as effectively use staff members with whom they do not feel sufficiently comfortable.

The measures of social and developmental engagement below use trainees' responses to a battery of ten items on the end-of-program survey. The instruction on the survey asks trainees to, "Please rate how important the staff in YouthBuild has been for you:..." Table 10.4 lists the ten items and shows the distribution of trainees' responses for each. Both statistically and logically, five of the items are most closely associated with our notion of social engagement. Hence, our index of social engagement comprises these five items.[130]

The other five items are logically related to *using* relationships for personal development. Participants who have higher values for these items presumably use the staff more than participants who have lower values. These items make up the index for

---

[130] Each item is standardized to have a mean of zero and a standard deviation of one. Then the items are added to create the index. The final value of the index is scaled to give it a mean of zero and a standard deviation of one among all respondents. The Cronbach's alpha is .76 for developmental engagement and .88 for social engagement. Both are quite good levels of inter-item reliability by conventional standards.

Table 10.4

Importance of Roles that Staff Play
from the End-of-Program Survey of YouthBuild Graduates
(Numbers Are Percentages of Total Responses, N=64, Four Site-Years Pooled)

Question: Please rate how important the staff in YouthBuild has been for you:

	VERY IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	ONLY A LITTLE IMPORTANT	NOT IMPORTANT
COMPONENTS OF DEVELOPMENTAL ENGAGEMENT:				
As teachers	71.43	28.57	0.00	0.00
As role models	41.27	49.21	6.35	3.17
As sources of information	53.97	34.92	11.11	0.00
As people who know what they're talking about	44.44	47.62	7.94	0.00
As people you can depend on	63.49	30.16	6.35	0.00
COMPONENTS OF SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT:				
As people to confide in	46.03	38.10	14.29	1.59
As people who really care about you	53.97	39.68	6.35	0.00
As people who really know you	33.87	41.94	20.97	3.23
As people to help with personal problems	41.27	47.62	7.94	3.17
As people to help you feel good about yourself	36.51	42.86	19.05	0.00

Which were the most and second most important?

	Most Important	Second Most Important
As teachers	34.15	16.67
As people to confide in	7.32	9.52
As role models	12.20	21.43
As sources of information	14.63	14.29
As people who really care about you	19.51	16.67
As people who really know you	0.00	0.00
For help with personal problems	2.44	2.38
To help you feel good about yourself	2.44	2.38
As people who know what they're talking about	0.00	4.76
As people you can depend on	7.32	11.90
TOTAL	100.00	100.00

Do you have at least one person on the staff who really cares about you and to whom you can go to talk about personal things? Yes: 93.22 No: 6.78

developmental engagement. The single-spaced tabulation at the bottom of the table shows the distribution of responses to a separate question that asked which of the ten items was most important and which was second most important. The line at the very bottom of the table shows that 93.22 percent of these YouthBuild graduates reported "... at least one person on the staff who really cares about you and to whom you can go to talk about personal things."

Our interpretations of the indices for social and developmental engagement receive considerable support from the pattern of their correlations with staff ratings relationships. Table 10.5 uses the indices for social and developmental engagement and data from relationship ratings that staff members produced during the early and later months of the program. Each month each staff member was asked to rate the quality of his or her relationship with each trainee, on a scale of one to five. Table 10.5 uses an early composite of these ratings, from the answers for months two through four, and a later composite for months seven and eight.[131]

Plus signs in table 10.5 indicate levels of statistical significance as in previous tables. However, in addition, this table shows simple correlations to which the levels of statistical significance apply. During the early months of the program, the correlation between staff ratings of relationships and our composite measure of *social* engagement is already statistically distinguishable from zero. In contrast, the correlation is low and statistically insignificant between the same staff ratings and the composite index for *developmental* engagement. By the later months, staff ratings are significantly correlated with the composite for developmental engagement. Moreover, the correlation for social engagement remains high. In fact, separate correlations shown for each of the five components of developmental engagement are higher for the later than for the earlier months. The reverse is true for social engagement. Nevertheless, social engagement remains a statistically significant correlate of staff-youth relationship ratings, even in the later months. The pattern in table 10.5 provides support for the idea that social engagement develops earlier than developmental engagement.

---

[131] We do not use relationship ratings for months after the eighth because more relationship ratings are missing for those final months.

If our indices of social and developmental engagement are measuring what we claim, then developmental engagement should be more strongly related than social engagement to gains in personal development. Table 10.6 presents the evidence that this is so. The indices of personal development in the table are the same as above: leadership proclivity, time management, ethics, drugs and crime and GED completion. The latter three indices are higher by statistically significant margins for participants who have higher values of the index for developmental engagement. The relationship of leadership proclivity to developmental engagement is positive but not statistically significant.[132]

Generally, social engagement has a much weaker association with these measures of personal transformation. Time management is the only measure of development that has even a weak association with the composite index for social engagement. Two items in the index for social engagement are responsible for the association. They are, by themselves, statistically significant predictors. The two are: "... as people to confide in" and "... as people who really know you." The statistical significance of these two items indicates that trainees make more progress getting their lives under control if they use the staff as personal counselors. Contrast this with two more purely emotional items, "... as people to care about you" and "... as people to help you feel good about yourself." Both are highly correlated with staff relationship ratings in table 10.5, but neither is a related to developmental gains in table 10.6. This pattern indicates that youth need more than staff

---

[132] It is instructive to note in this context that changes in LEADERSHIP PROCLIVITY are changes primarily in attitudes and intentions. Changes in the other three indices of development require shifts in behavior and performance. It makes sense that changes in behavior and performance might require more active use of staff assistance.

Table 10.5

Simple Correlations between Measures of Engagement from End-of-Program Questionnaire and Ratings by Staff Members of Staff-Youth Relationships

	Staff Members' Ratings of Staff-Youth Relationships	
	Early (Months 2,3,4)	Late (Months 7,8)
COMPONENTS OF DEVELOPMENTAL ENGAGEMENT:		
As teachers	-0.1277 ns	0.0086 ns
As role models	0.3105 ++	0.3794 +++
As sources of information	0.1071 ns	0.2453 +
As people who know what they're talking about	0.2196 +	0.3533 +++
As people you can depend on	-0.0957 ns	0.0058 ns
Composite Developmental Engagement	**0.1050** **ns**	**0.2636** **++**
COMPONENTS OF SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT:		
As people to confide in	0.2303 +	0.2235 +
As people who really care about you	0.2516 +	0.2411 +
As people who really know you	0.2563 +	0.2197 +
As people to help you with personal problems	0.2003 ns	0.0925 ns
As people to help you feel good about yourself	0.4222 +++	0.3470 +++
Composite of Social Engagement	**0.3284** **+++**	**0.2726** **++**

Significance Levels: ns = over .13; + = .06 to .13; ++ = .02 to .059;
+++ = .0011 to .019; ++++ = .001 and below.

N=52

Table 10.6

Statistical Significance of Relationships between
Four Indicators of Development for YouthBuild Graduates and the Importance
They Ascribe to Aspects of their Relationships with Staff Members

PREDICTING CHANGES IN:	LEADERSHIP PROCLIVITY	TIME MANAGEMENT	ETHICS, DRUGS & CRIME	GED COMPLETION
COMPONENTS OF DEVELOPMENTAL ENGAGEMENT:				
As teachers	+	ns	ns	++
As role models	+	+++	ns	ns
As sources of information	+	++	+++	ns
As people you can depend on	+	+++	ns	++
As people who know what they're talking about	ns	++++	ns	+++
Composite Index of Items above for Developmental Engagement	**ns**	**++++**	**++**	**++**
COMPONENTS OF SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT:				
As people to confide in	+++	+++	ns	ns
As people who really know you	ns	++	ns	+++
As people who care about you	ns	ns	ns	ns
As people to help you with personal problems	ns	ns	ns	ns
As people to help you feel good about yourself	ns	ns	ns	ns
Composite Index of items above for Social Engagement	**ns**	**+**	**ns**	**ns**

Note: The above are significance levels for coefficients on listed variables from regressions that control for site-year effects and base-line values for dependent variables. Equations for GED completion control for predicted likelihood of GED completion based on base-line variables, for importance of GED to trainee, and for importance of reading and math skills to trainee.

Significance Levels: ns = over .13; + = .06 to .13; ++ = .02 to .059; +++ = .0011 to .019; ++++ = .001 and below.

members who care and help them to feel good about themselves. What they need in addition, is quality instruction and assistance with the developmental tasks that personal growth requires. Some youth are more inclined than others to reach out for such help, just as some staff members are more effective at making themselves available and "user-friendly."

PREDICTORS OF ENGAGEMENT

In theory, differences among trainees in levels of engagement may be consequences of many factors -- some primarily within the person and some primarily contextual. Chapter 9 gives examples of both types. In the present chapter that uses quantitative data, many measures of attitudes, life styles and context are plausible to consider as possible predictors of engagement. Surprisingly, of the many variables from the base-line survey that are plausible, only three are statistically significant predictors of engagement.[133] They are associated most strongly with developmental engagement, and remain statistically significant predictors even in multivariate regression equations that include the index for social engagement and indicator variables for site-years among the controls.

The three are listed across the columns of Table 10.7, following the heading: "PREDICTORS."[134] The variable named "CONTROL," listed at the top of the first

---

[133] The procedure used to identify these explanatory variables was ad hoc -- we searched for simple correlations. Other statistical analyses in the report are grounded more firmly in theory.

[134] To constrict table 4.7, each of the items that make up the indices for engagement, as well as each of the two composite indices for engagement, took turns as the dependent variable in each of three multiple regressions. Each regression included indicator variables to distinguish sites and one of the three predictors -- "CONTROL," "Follow Friends into Trouble," or "Expect Legal Income Higher than Illegal." The plus signs indicating levels of statistical significance pertain to the significance of the variable at the column head, in predicting the measure of engagement on that row of the table.

Multivariate regressions that include all three of the predictor variables produce the same basic pattern of results as shown in table 4.7, albeit with slightly lower levels of statistical significance for the individual predictors. When developmental engagement is the dependent variable, the coefficient for each of the three is statistically significant at better than the .05 level.

Table 10.7

Statistical Significance of Three Measures from the Base-Line Questionnaire as Predictors of Items that Enter the Indices for Social and Developmental Engagement

PREDICTORS:	CONTROL	Follow Friends into Trouble (frequency)	Expect Legal Income Higher than Illegal
DEVELOPMENTAL ENGAGEMENT:			
As teachers	++(neg)	+++	+++
As role models	ns	++	++
As sources of information	++(neg)	+	+++
As people you can depend on	+(neg)	++	ns
As people who know what they are talking about	ns	+++	++
Composite Dev. Engagement	++++(neg)	++++	++++
COMPONENTS OF SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT:			
As people to confide in	ns	++	ns
As people who really know you	ns	++	+
As people who care about you	ns	ns	++
For help with personal problems	+(neg)	+	++
As people to help you feel good about yourself	ns	ns	++
Composite of Social Engagement	ns	++	+++

Note: The above are significance levels for coefficients on listed variables from regressions that control for site-year effects.

Significance Levels: ns = over .13; + = .06 to .13; ++ = .02 to .059; +++ = .0011 to .019; ++++ = .001 and below.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

column, is an index of items that capture the respondent's beliefs at the beginning of the program regarding the importance of knowledge and effort, as opposed to chance, in determining future earnings. CONTROL is actually the average of two other indices called KNOWLEDGE and EFFORT, minus a third index called CHANCE. See definitions in chapter 5 for more detail and discussion of these indices.[135]

Graduates with higher values for CONTROL score lower on our index of developmental engagement. This resonates with the finding in chapter 7 that participants who enter the program with high values for CONTROL are less likely to reach graduation.Both the lower rating on developmental engagement (among graduates) and the higher propensity to drop out (among all trainees) seem to indicate greater reliance on help from the staff by those participants who, at the beginning of the program, were least certain concerning whether knowledge and effort would be more important than chance.

While somewhat surprising, this is not necessarily illogical.[136] Perhaps those who feel most secure (i.e., most in control) are not inclined to rely as much on the staff. For example, even though they are negatively related to one another, the base-line index for CONTROL and our index of developmental engagement from the end of the program are both positive predictors of GED completion. Hence, for earning the GED, it appears that greater developmental engagement in relationships with staff members may compensate for initial uncertainty about the efficacy of effort.

Column 2 of the table is consistent with the same general story. It indicates that graduates who are most prone to follow friends into trouble in the months immediately prior to the program report the highest values of both social and developmental engagement. CONTROL and "follow friends into trouble" are negatively correlated with one another. Their simple correlation coefficient is minus 0.27, and statistically significant at conventional levels. The fact that youth who tended to follow friends into trouble have the higher levels of developmental engagement suggests that some may have adopted the YouthBuild staff as their leaders in place of trouble-prone peers. To the extent that this is true, allowing participants to remain in contact with members of the staff after the program formally ends may be important for helping youth not to experience relapses into self-destructive associational patterns. Indeed, informal reports say that many youth do stay in touch, but this research has no data on what happens to trainees once they leave.

---

[135] Findings in chapter ?? show that participants with higher base-line values of CONTROL tend to be less likely than others to complete the program but more likely than others to complete the GED. Conversely, participants who have low values for this index are less prone to leave the program but also less successful at completing the GED.

[136] Unfortunately, we did not repeat the items on the end-of-program survey that would have allowed us to compare the base-line value of CONTROL with that from the end of the program.

The third variable from the base-line survey that is a statistically significant predictor of engagement is not correlated with CONTROL or with the propensity to follow friends into trouble. It is the participant's belief concerning the potential returns to legal as opposed to illegal employment. Among this sample of YouthBuild graduates, those who reported an expectation on the base-line survey that legal employment offers higher incomes, tend to become more deeply engaged in YouthBuild both socially and developmentally. This is what most theories of rational decision making would predict, since these are the youth who expect the highest payoffs relative to illegal alternatives. They become engaged industriously in acquiring the habits, knowledge and skills that mainstream life styles and conventional jobs require.

CONCLUSION

Each participant in YouthBuild experiences the program in a unique way. Compared to his or her peers in the program, each develops more along some dimensions and less along others. Focusing on any single measure of performance, for example, completion of the GED, would capture achievements for some trainees but miss what others accomplish.

Indeed, differences in statistical patterns for the various measures of personal transformation in this chapter highlight the fact that development in YouthBuild is multifaceted. In addition to completion of the GED, the chapter examines changes in leadership proclivities, time management, ethical behavior and caring for children -- all measures that are important for healthy and productive lives.

The chapter studies a sample of YouthBuild graduates from the second year of the YouthBuild Demonstration Project. The four site-years in the sample include the second cycles for Boston, San Francisco and Gary as well as the first cycle for Gary (Gary began and ended a year later than the others). The findings establish that graduates from these four site-years as a pooled sample achieved statistically significant gains in personal development. Compared with his or her own base-line, the typical graduate in the sample has a greater interest in leadership by the end of the program, his life is more organized and he exhibits more caring than before for the welfare of children.

Conversely, an index to measure changes in ethics and involvement with drugs and crime shows no significant change. The primary explanation for this finding is that trainees who have especially low ratings on the index for ethics, drugs and crime at the base line tend not to last through the program. Hence, it appears that YouthBuild is not very successful at changing the behaviors of youth who have a continuing dependence on drugs, crime and dishonesty. Participants who are most "ready" for YouthBuild typically have left such dependencies behind before they even apply for the program.

Other statistical findings in the chapter buttress the story of youth transformation that chapter 9 tells in purely qualitative terms. The distinction between social and developmental engagement finds support. The index that measures developmental engagement is much more important than the index for social engagement in predicting developmental gains. However, social engagement is significantly correlated with staff members' ratings of their relationships with youth early in the program. The same is true for developmental engagement only in the later months of the program cycle. We conclude that caring relationships achieved through social engagement are probably necessary but not sufficient for youth development. Sufficient conditions appear to include developmental engagement, in which the participant enlists the help of caring members of the staff to do the work that development requires. Again, chapter 9 explains the process in some detail.

Finally, we cannot say whether the changes measured here would have occurred to the same degree if trainees had not participated in YouthBuild or some similar program. Without a comparison group of nonparticipants, we have no data with which to answer the "but-for" question. Similarly, without long-term follow-up of graduates we lack information about the program's impact upon life trajectories. Future studies that have comparison groups of non-participants and long-term follow-up of graduates will provide better evidence on these important questions. For now, it seems most reasonable to conclude that YouthBuild did indeed contribute to the gains that the chapter reports.

CHAPTER 10, APPENDIX A: THE DATA

Participants completed five written questionnaires. These included a general information survey at the base line, a survey on lifestyles and attitudes at the base line, a youth opinion survey at the fourth and eight months of each cycle and an end-of-program survey. The end-of-program survey was designed after the first year to be administered only for the second cycle of the demonstration. In addition to the surveys of participants, we asked each staff member to complete a form each month rating the quality of his or her relationship with each trainee.

Staff at each site administered the "Base-Line Questionnaire on Life Styles and Attitudes" to participants on the first day of the program.[137] The questionnaires solicited information on several topics, including the way that participants spent their time in the few months preceding the program and what they expected to be doing in the future. In order to document change, the end-of-program survey, called, "YouthBuild: Looking Back and Looking Forward," repeated many of the same questions.

Trainees completed the end-of-program survey at three of the five sites -- Boston, Gary and San Francisco. Cleveland and Tallahassee experienced difficulty scheduling the survey before their trainees left and, therefore, their data are not available. Fortunately, Gary's first year of operation occurred during the second year of the demonstration and Gary's director agreed to administer the end-of-program survey for both of its two cycles. Hence, the four site-years that completed the end-of-program questionnaire are the second

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

---

[137] The research team designed the questionnaire in collaboration with YouthBuild USA, and field-tested it with trainees in Boston in the year before the demonstration began. Each trainee sealed his or her completed questionnaire in an envelope, signed across the seal and passed the envelope to a staff member who mailed the batch to the research team. Staff who administered the surveys assured trainees that their individual answers would be confidential, known only to the research team. The procedure of sealing forms in envelopes to assure participants of confidentiality was repeated for the end-of-program survey.

cycles for Boston and San Francisco and both cycles for Gary.[138]

As explained in other chapters, participants are considered to be "YouthBuild Graduates" if they earn "positive terminations."[139] In fact, one quarter of the participants who received positive terminations at the four site-years that completed the end-of-program survey were unavailable to respond to the survey.[140] To compare the non-respondents with the respondents, we draw upon the findings from another chapter of this report. That analysis estimates the probability of positive termination for each YouthBuild participant, based on information from base-line questionnaires.[141] The chart below shows the mean predictions for respondents and non-respondents for each of the

Site-Year	Completed Survey		Mean Predicted Positive Termination Probability	
	Number	(% of total graduates)	Respondents	Non-Respondents
#22	9	(50%)	71%	66%
#42	26	(74%)	82%	83%
#51	20	(87%)	72%	81%
#52	9	(75%)	61%	49%
Total	64	(73%)	74%	72%

---

[138] From these four site-years, a total of 110 participants (80 percent of all who attended) answered the base-line survey on life styles and attitudes; 64 answered the end of program survey; 51 answered both. The 13 respondents who answered the end-of-program survey but not the base-line on life styles and attitudes entered the program toward the middle of the cycle. Clearly, these latter participants cannot be included in the before-and-after calculations below that compare base-line life styles and attitudes with those at the end of the program. One attended site-year #22, seven attended #42, four attended #51 and one attended #52.

[139] Four of the 64 who completed the end-of-program survey did not have positive terminations. One from site-year #22 and another from #51, are officially listed with negative terminations, but are included here because they were still around in the last week of the program and staff had them answer the survey. Another two, one from site-year #22 and another from #52, have no listed termination status because, apparently, they were being allowed to continue into the next cycle. All 4 are included in calculations reported here for graduates.

[140] Most respondents who completed the survey did so on site during the final week of the program. Responsibility for tracking down participants who were not on site rested with the site. We do not have good information concerning why sites were unable to reach some of their participants to complete the survey. Site year #22 had financial difficulties during the second half of the cycle and had to shut down for about one month. During this month, some youth found jobs. The low response rate on the end of program survey for this site may be because several youth who received positive terminations were not actively on site after the shutdown.

[141] Base-line data for some variables such as age, years of schooling and felony record are available for all trainees. Other variables are only available for those who entered the program at the regular start date and therefore completed the base-line questionnaire on life styles and attitudes. Any predictions for youth who did not complete the latter survey are based on substituting the site-year's average value for the missing variables. This applies to 13 of the 64 participants who completed the end-of-program survey.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

four sites that completed the end-of-program survey. Aside from three non-respondents at site-year #52, the chart shows that graduates who were available to respond to the survey were not dramatically different from the non-respondents. However, both groups were quite different on average from non-graduates, whose characteristics typically gave them only a 50:50 estimated likelihood of completing the program.

Other issues of representativeness concern whether the characteristics of participants (and the implementation of the program) at the four site-years that completed the survey are similar to those at the other six. First, the following chart shows comparisons of age, schooling, positive terminations and GED completions. It includes all trainees who took part at all ten site-years of the demonstration.

	Four Site-Years that Did EOP Survey	Six Site-Years that Did Not
Mean Age	20.6	20.5
Mean Years of Schooling	10.5	10.6
Actual Positive Termination Rate	69%	67%
Actual GED Completion Rate	27%	27%
	N=121	N=215

Clearly, participants who attended the four site-years in the first column appear very similar on average to those who attended the six in the second column.

Nevertheless, the similarities above do not provide any evidence regarding whether answers for the four site-years that responded to the end-of-program survey are similar to what the answers would have been for the other six if they had completed the same survey. Fortunately, answers to the "Youth Opinion Survey" (YOP) are at least somewhat instructive. The YOP survey was administered around the 4th and 8th months of each program cycle for all ten site-years of the demonstration. All participants in attendance for each survey responded to five categories of questions.

Trainees were not required to write their names on the YOP forms and therefore we cannot match each trainee's answers with his or her base-line information. Nevertheless, we can tabulate responses by site-year. Table 10A.1 shows answers to selected items, tabulated separately for the four site-years that answered the end-of-program survey and the six that did not. The table combines answers across both cycles of the demonstration and both times that the survey was administered during each cycle.[142]

The items in the table concern qualities of the construction training site, the classroom and other aspects of the program. The words "yes" or "no" in the final column indicate whether the line pertains to the four site-years that completed the EOP survey, or to the other six. The composite pattern of trainees' responses is quite similar for the two groups. In each case, the largest percentage of answers in the "yes" column is for the item "People care about the quality of our work" for construction and "Teachers care how we're doing" for the classroom. Similarly, the lowest percentage is for "The advisory or policy committee is meeting regularly." Indeed, we know from visits to the sites that starts and stops in activity by the policy committee were characteristic of all the sites. Table 10A.2 presents tabulations for a longer list of items from the same survey.

---

[142] Each participant who was present on both days that the survey was administered during his or her cycle is represented twice.

Table 10A.1

Response Patterns for Selected Items on Participant Opinion Survey for Four Site-Years Whose Graduates Completed the End-of-Program Survey and Six Site-Years Whose Graduates Did Not (Numbers Are Percentages of Total Responses, Lines Sum to 100)

	NO	SOMETIMES	YES	DID EOP SURVEY?
CONSTRUCTION SITE				
We are learning a lot.	8.80	19.44	71.76	no
	7.69	21.15	71.15	yes
It is well run.	6.02	33.80	60.19	no
	5.19	31.82	62.99	yes
We are treated with respect.	8.80	26.39	64.81	no
	7.05	25.00	67.95	yes
People care about the quality of our work.	3.74	13.55	82.71	no
	3.87	9.03	87.10	yes
BASIC SKILLS CLASSROOM				
We are learning a lot.	4.07	15.38	80.54	no
	5.77	17.95	76.28	yes
Teachers care how we're doing.	5.02	10.05	84.93	no
	8.39	12.26	79.35	yes
Classes are interesting.	6.33	28.51	65.16	no
	7.10	27.10	65.81	yes
OTHER ASPECTS				
Directors know what they're doing.	2.75	26.61	70.64	no
	2.58	18.71	78.71	yes
The counselor has enough time for me when I need it.	5.14	27.10	67.76	no
	8.33	26.28	65.38	yes
The discipline and policies are fairly enforced.	11.01	26.61	62.39	no
	8.97	30.13	60.90	yes
The Advisory or Policy Committee is meeting regularly.	15.61	34.63	49.76	no
	10.34	31.03	58.62	yes

Note: The Participant Opinion Survey is administered twice during each cycle, at roughly the 4th and 8th months. N=225 responses for the 6 site-years not covered by the end-of-program survey and N=162 for the four site-years that the end-of-program survey covers.

Table 10A.2

Ratings From Participant Opinion Surveys
Pooled For All Five Sites Across Both Cycles Of The Demonstration
(Numbers are Percentages of Total Responses)

CONSTRUCTION SITE	Yes	Sometimes	No
People care about the quality of our work	84.55	11.65	3.79
Supervisors teach us well	79.89	15.28	4.83
Safety rules are followed	71.85	24.13	4.02
The staff comes on time	67.83	25.47	6.43
We are learning a lot	71.51	20.16	8.33
The staff build good relationships among the crew	70.08	20.75	9.16
It is well run	61.35	32.97	5.68
We are treated with respect	66.13	25.81	8.06
We have what we need to work with	61.92	30.68	7.40
We work steadily	58.86	35.69	5.45
We get along with each other	58.22	35.58	6.20
We get enough feedback on how we're doing	56.22	27.02	16.76
It is well organized	51.21	38.27	10.51
CLASSROOM			
Teachers know their subjects	82.76	12.73	4.51
Teachers help us individually when we need it	84.08	11.41	4.51
Teachers care how we're doing	82.62	10.96	6.42
We're learning a lot	78.78	16.45	4.77
We get to know and like one another during class	70.78	25.47	3.75
The subjects we're learning are what we need	73.14	19.15	7.71
Classes are interesting	65.43	27.93	6.65
Staff come on time	65.51	29.41	5.08
OTHER ASPECTS			
The directors care	79.03	16.94	4.03
The directors know what they're doing	73.99	23.32	2.68
The directors solve problems	62.06	33.33	4.61
The counselor cares about me	78.08	17.53	4.38
The counselor cares about everyone	75.89	18.08	6.03
The counselor has enough time for me when I need it	66.76	26.76	6.49
The job developer has lots of ideas for me	64.79	23.38	11.83
The discipline & policies are fairly enforced	61.76	28.07	10.16
In general, the adults here listen	66.85	28.03	5.12
The policies and discipline are fair	63.10	27.01	9.89
We get to have a say in the things that are done	53.76	34.95	11.29
The advisory or policy committee meets regularly	53.43	33.14	13.43
I'm aware that we're part of a movement	83.29	8.89	7.82

Note: Survey is administered twice during each cycle, at roughly the 4th and 8th months. N=387 responses across 10 site-years.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

CHAPTER 10, APPENDIX 10B: CORRELATES OF DEVELOPMENT

Each participant in YouthBuild is different. Each has a particular support structure outside of the program and behaves in unique ways that illicit distinctive responses from others in the program environment. Each has specific priorities and a personal assessment of the degree to which the program meets his or her needs. Trainees in the same classroom, for example, may disagree about the quality of the instruction. Or, while one trainee may regard construction training as the most important aspect of the program, another might be most concerned with strengthening his or her reading and math skills. Are such assessments and priorities related to the program's developmental outcomes in ways that might yield practical insights?

This appendix asks whether the gains that a participant achieves during the program in time management, leadership proclivity, behavior and GED completion are correlated with the participant's assessments at the end of the program regarding the quality of the program and the personal importance to the participant of various program offerings and activities.

Consider two simple hypotheses. One is that trainees will experience the most growth in domains that they perceive to be served by high quality in the implementation of the program. Causation is probably reciprocal. For example, if trainees perceives that leadership training in YouthBuild is of high quality, this perception may affect the degree to which they concentrate to take advantage of this aspect of their training and concentration may cause their understanding to grow. Conversely, if trainees are developing an interest in, for example, leadership, they may communicate this to the relevant instructors and thereby motivate an improvement in the quality of leadership training, real and perceived.

A second related hypothesis is that trainees who regard particular domains as more important will achieve greater gains in those domains than others who regard the same domains as less important. Again, the causation can go both ways, as perceptions of importance in a particular domain may inspire gains, and the positive experience of achieving gains may inspire feelings that the domain is important. We test only for the existence of simple statistical relationships, making no attempt through the methodology to untangle the story of causation. Nevertheless, the patterns of association in the data call attention to significant practical issues and have tentative but interesting implications for program practices and evaluation.

We proceed now to discover whether the data support our rudimentary hypotheses. Tables and text summarize participants' answers to questions from the end-of-program survey and present statistical findings from multiple regressions.[143]

Components and Qualities

Table 10B.1 shows the distribution of participants' answers to questions about program components and qualities. Table 10B.2 shows the statistical significance of relationships among the items in table 10B.1 and the indices of personal growth listed at the top of each column of table 10B.2. Two of the items in table 10B.1 are combined in table 10B.2 to create a variable called "fairness." The two items appear after the phrase, "When staff took disciplinary actions, ..." The items ask: "... did their reasons seem fair?" and "... were their reasons consistent with the rules in the contract?" Other components and qualities in table 10B.2 are the same as tabulated in table 10B.1.

Patterns of statistical significance in table 10B.2 demonstrate that improvement in time management and leadership proclivity tend to be associated in a statistically significant manner with trainees' judgments regarding the quality of program components. These results come from multiple regressions, each of which controls for the base-line value of the respective index and uses "0,1" indicator variables to control for differences

---

143

among the site-years. The strongest relationships are for the quality of classroom instruction. For time management and leadership proclivity, these findings affirm the hypothesis that, within any given site, trainees who give the program the highest ratings tend to be those who make the most progress, and *vice versa*. Given the available data, we cannot gauge the degree to which they make the most progress because they experience the program more positively, or experience the program more positively because they make the most progress, or both.

Table 10B.1

Selected Ratings of Program Quality
from the End-of-Program Survey of YouthBuild Graduates

(Numbers Are Percentages of Total Responses, N=64, Four Site-Years Pooled)

Question: How would you rate the quality of YouthBuild with regard to:

	Very Good	Good	Okay	Poor
Construction Training	35.94	51.56	12.50	0.00
Counseling	32.81	42.19	21.88	3.13
Leadership Training	42.19	45.31	12.65	0.00
Classroom Instruction	68.75	21.88	7.81	1.56
Respect for Youth	43.75	51.56	1.56	3.13

Question: When staff took disciplinary actions,

	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom
did their reasons seem fair?	24.19	58.06	14.52	3.26
were their reasons consistent with the rules in the contract?	22.58	64.52	11.29	1.61

Question: Did staff care about what trainees had to say about how the program should be run?

Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom
32.26	54.84	11.29	1.61

Table 10B.2

Statistical Significance of
Relationships between Ratings by YouthBuild Graduates of Program Quality
and Growth in Four Indicators of their Development

PREDICTING CHANGES IN:	LEADERSHIP PROCLIVITY	TIME MANAGEMENT	ETHICS, DRUGS & CRIME	GED COMPLETION
QUALITY RATINGS FOR YOUTHBUILD COMPONENTS:				
Construction Training	+	+	+	ns
Counseling	++	++	ns	ns
Leadership Training	+	++	ns	ns
Classroom Instruction	++	++++	ns	+++
Composite of Items Above	+++	++++	ns	ns
QUALITY RATINGS FOR YOUTHBUILD QUALITIES:				
Respect for Youth	+	++++	+++	ns
Fairness	ns	++++	++	ns
Staff Care about What Trainees Say about How Program Should Be Run	++	+	ns	ns

Note: The above are significance levels for coefficients on listed variables from regressions that control for site-year effects and base-line values for dependent variables. Equations for GED completion control for predicted likelihood of GED completion (using estimates from another chapter of this report), for importance of the GED to the trainee, and for importance of reading and math skills to the trainee.

Significance Levels: ns = over .13; + = .06 to .13; ++ = .02 to .059;
+++ = .0011 to .019; ++++ = .001 and below.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

GED completion is related only, albeit strongly, to assessments of classroom quality. This is not surprising, but it is noteworthy. It highlights the distinction between GED completion as a domain of personal development and the other domains covered by indices in the other columns. It calls attention to the fact that participants who fail to earn the GED may achieve statistically significant levels of personal growth on other dimensions.

The index for ethics, drugs and crime is moderately correlated with trainees' assessments of the construction training component and highly correlated with their perceptions concerning whether staff members respect young people and treat them fairly. As above, the causation is probably reciprocal, especially regarding respect and fairness: trainees' behaviors (i.e., ethics, drugs and crime) probably affect how staff members treat them which, in turn, probably affects their behaviors. This pattern of correlations is not surprising. It is important, however, because it appears to confirm the interdependence between young people's behaviors and their perceptions of whether authority figures can be trusted to be fair and respectful.

Next, tables 10B.3 and 10B.4 present findings analogous to those in the previous two tables. Here, however, participants' judgments about program components and qualities are replaced by the importance to them of particular aspects of the YouthBuild experience. As introduced above, the simple hypothesis here is that trainees will experience the most growth on dimensions associated with aspects of the program that they consider to be important. Again, we assume that causation runs in both directions. Table 10B.3 tabulates trainees' responses. The single-spaced section at the bottom of the table comes from a separate question that asked which of the listed items were "most important" and "second most important." GED preparation is clearly the most important.

Table 10B.3
Levels of Importance for Various Aspects of the YouthBuild Experience from the End-of-Program Survey of YouthBuild Graduates

(Numbers Are Percentages of Total Responses, N=64, Four Site-Years Pooled)

Question: For each of the items listed below, please indicate how important it has been to you:

	MOST IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	NOT IMPORTANT	DOESN'T APPLY TO ME
Construction training	26.56	35.94	32.81	4.69	0.00
The Program has been "for real"	23.81	36.51	33.33	4.76	1.59
GED preparation	74.60	17.46	3.17	0.00	4.76
Better reading and math skills	65.57	29.51	4.92	0.00	0.00
Help getting into college	46.88	29.69	17.19	1.56	4.69
New friends and positive people	43.75	35.94	20.31	0.00	0.00
It has been fun	37.50	35.94	21.88	4.69	0.00
The staff treated me well	30.65	51.61	14.52	3.23	0.00
I helped my community	37.50	37.50	21.88	1.56	1.56
I made good use of my time	40.63	46.88	12.50	0.00	0.00
I got paid	25.00	34.38	26.56	14.05	0.00
Leadership training	42.86	34.92	22.22	0.00	0.00

Of all the things listed above, which two were the most important?

	Most important	Next most important
GED preparation	41.82	22.64
Construction training	14.55	9.43
Help getting into college	12.73	7.55
I got paid	7.27	5.66
Better reading and math skills	5.45	13.21
Leadership training	5.45	13.21
I made good use of my time	5.45	3.77
New friends and positive people	3.64	7.55
I helped my community	3.64	1.89
The Program has been "for real"	0.00	7.55
The staff treated me well	0.00	5.66
It has been fun	0.00	1.89
Total	100.00%	100.00%

Table 10B.4

Statistical Significance of Relationships between Four Indices of Development for YB Graduates and Answers on the End-of-Program Survey to:

"For each item, please indicate how important it has been to you."

PREDICTING CHANGES IN:	LEADERSHIP PROCLIVITY	TIME MANAGEMENT	ETHICS, DRUGS & CRIME	GED COMPLETION
IMPORTANCE OF COMPONENTS & QUALITIES:				
Construction training	ns	ns	ns	ns
GED preparation	ns	ns	+++	ns
Leadership training	++++	ns	ns	ns
The staff treated me well	++++	+++	ns	ns
YB has been "for real "	ns	++++	ns	ns
IMPORTANCE OF INCOME & ASSISTANCE:				
I got paid	ns	+++	ns	ns
Help getting into college	+	ns	ns	+++
IMPORTANCE OF ENJOYMENT:				
It has been fun	+	+	ns	ns
New friends & positive people	ns	ns	ns	+
IMPORTANCE OF BEING PRODUCTIVE:				
I helped my community	+++	ns	ns	ns
I made good use of my time	+++	+++	+++	++
Better reading & math skills	ns	ns	ns	++++

Note: The above are significance levels for coefficients on listed variables from regressions that control for site-year effects and base-line values for dependent variables. Equations for GED completion control for predicted likelihood of GED completion based on base-line variables, for importance of GED to trainee, and for importance of reading and math skills to trainee.

Significance Levels: ns = over .13; + = .06 to .13; ++ = .02 to .059; +++ = .0011 to .019; ++++ = .001 and below.

The fact that GED preparation was a high priority for a large percentage of trainees may help to explain the relative lack of correlation in table 10B.4 between the importance of GED preparation and personal growth, including GED completion. The only significant correlation for GED preparation is its relationship to ethics, drugs and crime, suggesting that behavior improved more (or deteriorated less) for participants who regarded GED preparation as more important. Conversely, and quite interestingly, the strongest predictor of GED completion in table 10B.4 is the participant's quest for better reading and math skills. One clear implication of this combination of findings is that participants should value reading and math skills *per se*: youth for whom reading and math skills are less important tend not to complete the GED, even if GED preparation is a high priority.

As one should expect, leadership proclivity in table 10B.4 increases most for participants who report that leadership training, helping the community and making good use of their time were important aspects of the YouthBuild experience. Similarly, the item "I made good use of my time" has the most direct and logical relationship to time management. Indeed, making good use of time is the only variable that is significant across all four columns -- participants for whom it was important to make good use of their time tended to make more progress on each of the four outcome measures.

The patterns in tables 10B.1 through 10B.4 tend to confirm the simple hypotheses with which this section began. Since these are only correlations (albeit, with controls for base-line values and site-year effects), causal interpretations should be made with great caution. Nevertheless, findings that are interesting and worth pursuing include at least the following three. First, the importance accorded to reading and math skills is a statistically significant predictor of GED completion, but the importance accorded to GED preparation has no such predictive power. Second, trainees who report that making good use of their time is very important to them are likely to make progress on multiple outcome measures.

Third, the four indices of personal development have distinct patterns of association with trainees' judgments regarding the quality of the program and the importance of its various aspects. These patterns in tables 10B.2 and 10B.4 highlight the importance of measuring progress on multiple dimensions -- observing progress (or lack thereof) in one domain is not a strong basis for inferring that there is or is not progress in others.

CHAPTER 10, APPENDIX C: ANSWERS TO END-OF-PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE

All numbers represent percentages. For each question, numbers sum to 100 percent of recorded responses. Most questions include between 1 and 5 missing responses. This survey was completed by trainees remaining at the end of the program cycle for the second year of the demonstration (1993) at Boston and San Francisco and both years (1993 & 1994) at Gary. Tabulations below include youth remaining on site at the end of these four site-years, for a total of 64 respondents.

Congratulations on completing YouthBuild! This is an end-of-program survey to help us learn how your year went and to improve the program for the future. Hopefully, you will enjoy filling it out. When you finish please place it in the large brown envelope, seal the envelope, and sign across the seal. The envelope will not be opened by the staff at your YouthBuild. We will send an overall summary of answers to your program director, but we will not identify individuals' answers -- no one at your site will know your personal answers. Please be sure your name is at the top of this page.

YOUTHBUILD: LOOKING BACK AND LOOKING AHEAD

1. How much better do you think your future will be because you have participated in the YouthBuild program?

Much Better	A little Better	The Same
60.94	37.50	1.56

2. How much did YouthBuild deliver on what it promised?

Totally	Mostly	Partly	Very Little
20.31	60.94	14.06	4.69

3. How would you rate the quality of YouthBuild with regard to:

	Very Good	Good	OK	Poor
a. Construction training	35.94	51.56	12.50	0.00
b. Counseling	32.81	42.19	21.88	3.13
c. Leadership training	42.19	45.31	12.65	0.00
d. Respect for young people	43.75	51.56	1.56	3.13
e. Classroom instruction	68.75	21.88	7.81	1.56
f. Helping you find a job or college	56.25	35.94	7.81	0.00
g. Preparing you to do well after YouthBuild	57.81	37.50	4.69	0.00

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

4. For each of the items listed below, please indicate HOW IMPORTANT it has been to you:

	MOST IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	NOT IMPORTANT	DOESN'T APPLY TO ME
a. Construction training	26.56	35.94	32.81	4.69	0.00
b. The Program has been "for real"	23.81	36.51	33.33	4.76	1.59
c. GED preparation	74.60	17.46	3.17	0.00	4.76
d. Better reading and math skills	65.57	29.51	4.92	0.00	0.00
e. Help getting into college	46.88	29.69	17.19	1.56	4.69
f. New friends and positive people	43.75	35.94	20.31	0.00	0.00
g. It has been fun	37.50	35.94	21.88	4.69	0.00
h. The staff treated me well	30.65	51.61	14.52	3.23	0.00
i. I helped my community	37.50	37.50	21.88	1.56	1.56
j. I made good use of my time	40.63	46.88	12.50	0.00	0.00
k. I got payed	25.00	34.38	26.56	14.05	0.00
l. Leadership training	42.86	34.92	22.22	0.00	0.00

5. Of all the things listed above, which two were the most important?

	Most important	Next most important
a.	14.55	9.43
b.	0.00	7.55
c.	41.82	22.64
d.	5.45	13.21
e.	12.73	7.55
f.	3.64	7.55
g.	0.00	1.89
h.	0.00	5.66
i.	3.64	1.89
j.	5.45	3.77
k.	7.27	5.66
l.	5.45	13.21
Total	100.00%	100.00%

7. Because of YouthBuild, do you expect to earn a better living?

Yes	Maybe	No
77.78	22.22	0.00

8. Because of YouthBuild, do you now THINK more before you act?

Yes, a lot	Yes, some	No
50.79	49.21	0.00

9. Because of YouthBuild, do you feel more confident?

Yes, a lot	Yes, some	No
53.97	44.44	1.59

11. Because of YouthBuild, do you take more responsibility than before:

	Yes, a lot	Yes, some	No
a. for yourself?	66.13	33.87	0.00
b. in your community?	38.33	61.67	0.00
c. for your children? (if you have kids)	77.27	9.09	13.64

12. Do you think that people believe in you more now because you have participated in YouthBuild?

	Yes	Maybe	No
Mother?	74.58	20.34	5.08
Father?	67.92	24.53	7.55
Girlfriend or boyfriend?	67.74	24.19	8.06
Other people?	52.46	43.62	4.92

13. How much did people believe in you before YouthBuild?

	A lot	Some	Not much
Mother?	50.00	33.33	16.67
Father?	43.64	36.36	20.00
Girlfriend or boyfriend?	42.62	42.62	14.75
Other people?	21.31	57.38	21.31

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

14. Please rate how important the staff in YouthBuild has been for you:

	VERY IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	ONLY A LITTLE IMPORTANT	NOT IMPORTANT
a. As teachers	71.43	28.57	0.00	0.00
b. As people to confide in	46.03	38.10	14.29	1.59
c. As role models	41.27	49.21	6.35	0.00
d. As sources of information	53.97	34.92	11.11	0.00
e. As people who really care about you	53.97	39.68	6.35	0.00
f. As people who really know you	33.87	41.94	20.97	3.23
g. For help with personal problems	41.27	47.62	7.94	3.17
h. To help you feel good about yourself	36.51	42.86	19.05	0.00
i. As people who know what they're talking about	44.44	47.62	7.94	0.00
j. As people you can depend on	63.49	30.16	6.35	0.00

15. Which two things from the last question were the most important?

	Most important	Next most important
a.	34.15	16.67
b.	7.32	9.52
c.	12.20	21.43
d.	14.63	14.29
e.	19.51	16.67
f.	0.00	0.00
g.	2.44	2.38
h.	2.44	2.38
i.	0.00	4.76
j.	7.32	11.90

16. Do you have at least one person on the staff who really cares about you and to whom you can go to talk about personal things?

Yes: 93.22 No: 6.78

18. When the staff took disciplinary actions did they explain their reasons clearly?

Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom
51.61	40.32	8.06	0.00

Did their reasons seem fair?

Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom
24.19	58.06	14.52	3.23

Were their reasons consistent with the rules in the contract?

Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom
22.58	64.52	11.29	1.61

19. Did the staff care about what trainees had to say about how the program should be run?

Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom
32.26	54.84	11.29	1.61

20. a. Now that you are out of YouthBuild, what is the next step for you?

Work	47.27
School	23.64
Work and School	20.00
Public Service	1.82
School and Public Service	1.82
Work and Public Service	1.82
Other	3.64
TOTAL	100.00

b. How much do you know about exactly what to do to succeed at this?

More than enough	Enough	Almost enough	Not nearly enough
27.87	49.19	21.31	1.64

c. How helpful was the staff in teaching you what you needed to know?

Very helpful	Sort of helpful	A little helpful	Not helpful
59.02	36.07	4.92	0.00

21. Do you already have a job to go to after YouthBuild?

Yes: 53.23 No: 46.77

If yes, did YouthBuild help you find this job? Yes: 84.84

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

PART 2. TIME

1. In the past few months, about how many hours per day did you usually spend: (Circle your answers)

	None or almost none	One	Two or three	Four or five	Six or more
a. watching TV or listening to music	3.33	8.33	66.67	15.00	6.67
b. hanging out	26.67	23.33	36.67	3.33	10.00
c. reading or studying	4.92	29.51	32.79	21.31	11.48
d. working	15.25	1.69	10.17	16.95	55.93
e. in school or training	11.67	1.67	8.33	18.33	60.00
f. looking for a job	56.90	1.72	20.69	12.07	8.62
g. sleeping	10.34	10.34	6.90	27.59	44.63
h. just lying around	36.67	31.67	28.33	0.00	3.33

2. In the past few months, how often did you:

	ALMOST EVERYDAY	ONCE OR OR TWICE A WEEK	ONCE OR OR TWICE A MONTH	ALMOST NEVER	DOESN'T APPLY TO ME
a. baby sit?	18.33	23.33	8.33	8.33	41.67
b. hang out with friends during the day?	11.67	23.33	23.33	26.67	15.00
c. hang out with friends past midnight?	4.92	19.67	22.95	31.15	21.31
d. participate in community organizations or do volunteer work?	14.75	21.31	36.07	19.67	8.20
e. break the law in order to earn money?	5.00	0.00	5.00	30.00	60.00
f. read a newspaper?	50.82	26.23	9.84	8.20	4.92
g. attend church?	6.78	25.42	23.73	27.12	16.95
h. drink beer or wine?	4.92	14.75	19.67	19.67	40.98
i. drink hard liquor?	1.64	4.92	16.39	19.67	57.38

	ALMOST EVERYDAY	ONCE OR OR TWICE A WEEK	ONCE OR OR TWICE A MONTH	ALMOST NEVER	DOESN'T APPLY TO ME
j. use marijuana?	3.28	4.92	13.11	18.03	60.66
k. use other drugs?	0.00	4.92	1.64	14.75	78.69
l. break a promise?	1.69	11.86	13.56	49.15	23.73
m. stay up past 2 o'clock in the morning?	5.00	18.33	25.00	30.00	21.67
n. try to set a good example for a child?	63.93	16.39	8.20	1.64	9.84
o. get angry?	16.39	29.51	22.95	24.59	6.56
p. follow friends into trouble?	0.00	1.67	5.00	40.00	53.33
q. feel proud of something good that you did?	50.84	36.07	9.84	0.00	3.28
r. keep to a schedule for getting up and going to bed?	47.54	22.95	13.11	9.84	6.56
s. spend time with your child?	42.37	16.95	1.69	0.00	38.98

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Part 3: THE FUTURE

1. Five years from now how likely is it that you will:

	VERY LIKELY	SOMEWHAT LIKELY	NOT LIKELY	I HAVE NOT THOUGHT ABOUT IT
a. Have a good job?	88.52	9.84	1.64	0.00
b. Have a high school or a GED degree?	92.45	5.66	1.89	0.00
c. Have a college degree?	51.67	25.00	15.00	8.33
d. Vote regularly?	76.67	15.00	5.00	3.33
e. Be proud of yourself?	95.00	5.00	0.00	0.00
f. Be married?	40.00	30.00	18.33	11.67
g. Be politically active?	20.21	37.50	35.94	6.25
h. Be in trouble with the law?	3.33	5.00	51.67	40.00
i. Speak at some public meetings?	21.31	32.79	31.15	14.75
j. Be living?	85.00	5.00	0.00	10.00
k. Participate in organizations?	48.33	31.67	13.33	6.67
l. Want to be a leader in your community?	47.54	32.79	13.11	6.56
m. Play a positive role in your community?	72.13	24.59	1.64	1.64
n. Have a positive attitude towards life?	81.97	14.75	3.28	0.00
o. Have children? (or more children)	50.85	16.95	22.03	10.17
p. Have moved out of the neighborhood?	35.00	25.00	28.33	11.67

PART V

CHAPTER 11: SUMMARY, LESSONS AND CONCLUSIONS

(by Ronald F. Ferguson and Phillip L. Clay)

CHAPTER 12: EPILOGUE

(by Dorothy Stoneman, YouthBuild USA)

CHAPTER 11

SUMMARY, LESSONS AND CONCLUSIONS

INTRODUCTION

This formative evaluation of the YouthBuild Demonstration Project penetrates the "black box" of the program in order to gather and disseminate lessons about program implementation and youth development.[144] The natural variation among the five sites -- Boston, Cleveland, Gary, San Francisco and Tallahassee -- over two cycles, offers ten site-years of program experience as data. Focusing on the variation, we suggest reasons that success varied among the participants at each site and among the ten site-years. Indeed, performance at each site differed from the first to the second cycle, with some sites improving and some doing worse in the second year. Boston in the second year of the demonstration was the strongest program; Tallahassee was the weakest in both years.

YouthBuild succeeded during the demonstration when conditions that favored success prevailed. Other times, it fell short. The sites had much in common. All had staff who cared deeply about young people. All participated in training and technical assistance from YouthBuild USA. Nevertheless, they differed in ways that had important consequences. The strongest of the ten met at least the following eight distinguishable conditions. The weakest failed much of the time on all eight:

- strong commitment to maintaining fidelity to the YouthBuild model and philosophy;
- executive leadership sufficiently qualified and devoted to perform all of the core duties required, including both internal management and fund raising;
- sufficient time between program cycles to allow for necessary planning;

---

[144] Formative evaluation, to help the program learn from its experience and to become more effective, is an appropriate precursor to more summative studies in the future that might do cost-benefit analysis or measure long-term net impacts. This study had no comparison or control group and did not track participants after they left the program.

- a suitable construction site for training YouthBuild participants;

- freedom from inappropriate constraints or meddling associated with being embedded in a financially weak host organization or one that does not share YouthBuild's culture or mission;

- adequate funding that is sufficiently flexible to cover staffing and materials for all aspects of the YouthBuild model;

- recruitment, screening and selection criteria and methods that produce a cohort of participants who truly want what the program has to offer and who seem determined to break away from any influences that might in the past have held them back or led them into trouble.

- directors and staff who are more than concerned and friendly; who, in addition to being likeable and emotionally supportive, are also steadfast in their insistence that youth should make the most of what YouthBuild has to offer. These are directors and staff who work steadily and competently to lead youth into developmental engagement toward personal growth, and not merely social engagement for an enjoyable experience.

None of the above happens by accident. Each point has strategic significance for any local site that wants to become or remain a successful YouthBuild program. Other important conditions for success appear to be the high ratio of staff to youth and the willingness of sites to use technical assistance, but these were violated less often than the eight items listed above, and therefore were less important in distinguishing among the sites.

This final chapter begins by reviewing briefly the comparisons that chapter 2 presents between outcomes achieved by the YouthBuild demonstration sites and by other programs serving similar clientele. Then, a short section called "YouthBuild at the Beginning" provides historical perspective. Next, the chapter summarizes themes concerning organizational and program development at the demonstration sites and reviews conclusions about construction training. It moves on to lessons about the process of youth development in YouthBuild and ends by reviewing quantitative predictors of program performance that have implications for standards and accountability.

COMPARING RESULTS WITH OTHER PROGRAMS

Chapter 2 offers simple comparisons of YouthBuild with five other programs: Urban Corps Expansion Project (UCEP), the New York City Volunteer Corps (CVC), Non-Residential Job Corps Centers, Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) programs for youth and JOBSTART. All operate in the types of communities and with the types of clientele that YouthBuild serves. Available data do not permit rigorous comparisons from which to conclude that YouthBuild is clearly more or less effective that the others. Hence, the simple statements that we are able to make comparing YouthBuild and the other programs are suggestive but not definitive.

Average length of stay and GED completion rates for the YouthBuild demonstration sites surpassed the same measures for the other programs. The average length of stay at YouthBuild demonstration sites was 8.3 months in year one and 6.3 months in year two. The highest at the comparison programs was 6.8 months for JOBSTART, while the others were lower than 6.3 months. YouthBuild had the highest rate of GED completion, at 20 percent (the best YouthBuild site-year achieved 45 percent). Among participants who left YouthBuild for reasons that could be classified as either positive or negative, 69 percent in the second cycle of the demonstration achieved positive terminations. In addition, daily attendance averaged 85 percent.

It is noteworthy that the demonstration sites achieved these results serving what is typically the most difficult population to attract and retain: minority males. Moreover, more than half of the participants acknowledge some prior involvement with the criminal justice system. Of the six programs, only JTPA (48 percent minority) served fewer than 90 percent minority participants. The comparison programs differed, however, in the representation of males. Eighty-four percent of participants at the YouthBuild demonstration sites were male. Compare this with 69 percent for UCEP, 37 percent for

Job Corps, 55 percent CVC, 44 percent for JTPA and 47 percent for JOBSTART.

The fact that YouthBuild demonstration sites achieved results that appear superior to the comparison programs while serving a larger-than-average percentage of minority males, more than half of whom confessed prior involvement with the criminal justice system, indicates that YouthBuild is among the most effective interventions for serving this population.

YOUTHBUILD AT THE BEGINNING

Literature on replication distinguishes a continuum. At one extreme are programs that are essentially concepts or philosophies. They leave it almost totally to practitioners to conceive ways of putting the concepts or philosophies into practice. At the other extreme are programs whose sites are virtually clones -- using the same tools and methods at every site, like outlets of a tightly-controlled franchise.

What we found as we began the research for this project was that YouthBuild was closer to the first extreme than we expected. YouthBuild USA, headed by Dorothy Stoneman, its founder, was a new organization with a small but dedicated staff. The organization was early on its learning curve. The answer to our question, "What is the YouthBuild model?" was a list of 14 program "components" and 15 "qualities." A handbook of several hundred pages explained them and other aspects of the model. In addition to the components and qualities, the model included: a staffing pattern that matched the major components and included a high ratio of staff to youth; the requirement that 50 percent of the time should be spent in the classroom for academic and leadership studies and 50 percent on the construction-training job site; and that the program should last at least 9 months.

This seemed like a good set of program characteristics -- even the right list.

However, when we asked, "But, what do people actually do?" or "On what basis might one declare that a site is really doing YouthBuild?" or "What is the YouthBuild approach to counseling or teaching GED preparation or construction or leadership?", the answers were amorphous. What YouthBuild USA had in 1991 was a philosophy, a vision, the outline of an effective program and an obviously talented leader. Funders did not support the YouthBuild demonstration project because of the details of the curriculum. None existed. Instead, they supported it based on what they heard of Stoneman's success at Banana Kelly and the Youth Action Program in New York, the vision that Stoneman articulated and the strength of her personality. Beginning with lists of program components and qualities, but no corresponding standards to calibrate compliance with either list and no well-defined curriculum, neither Stoneman nor anyone else knew for sure what was about to happen as the demonstration got under way.

Ultimately, the five demonstration sites became *de facto* collaborators with YouthBuild USA to put details in the original design. As YouthBuild USA trained and tutored the demonstration sites, the experience of responding to the sites (and to us, the evaluators) trained and tutored YouthBuild USA. The original question, "Can YouthBuild be replicated?" should have been, "Can YouthBuild develop?" The answer is yes. It did and it is still developing.

In the end, the point was not to replicate what happened at the two sites where YouthBuild was born, Banana Kelly and the Youth Action Program in New York City. Instead, the point was to develop a system of guidance for sites around the nation that wanted to serve communities and young people according to the philosophy and principles of human development embodied in YouthBuild's list of components and qualities. Today, with a formal network of sites that collaborates with YouthBuild USA to define its own standards, YouthBuild USA is providing and continuing to develop that system of guidance.[145] The components and qualities are essentially unchanged from the initial vision, but the essentials have been distilled from the initial handbook of several hundred pages, and a more sophisticated set of technical assistance materials and procedures has developed.

Even with a model that is more complete, standards that are more specific and technical assistance that is more expert, the challenges that sites face today in developing new organizations and the challenges that youth face in developing themselves, are generically the same as during the demonstration. Hence, while the information for this report comes from an earlier stage of YouthBuild's development, in what are now historical examples (from 1991-1994), the lessons are general. They remain relevant for current practice.

ORGANIZATIONAL AND PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

This section of the chapter summarizes why some of the demonstration sites experienced more success than others did at developing strong YouthBuild organizations. The factors that this section highlights will remain standard ones in determining the success of current and future sites. They suggest issues that funders and technical assistance providers may choose to monitor in tracking progress; they are explanations to test in the effort to explain poor performance.

Executive Leadership

Each site in the YouthBuild demonstration had an executive director and a program manager who operated as a leadership team. While the executive director was clearly the senior officer, the precise division of roles and responsibilities varied from site to site and from year to year. Generally, the program manager had primary responsibility for day-to-day management of services for youth, while the executive handled everything else and supervised the program manager.

---

[145] See: "YouthBuild Program Standards." YouthBuild USA, Somerville MA. February 1994.

Three of the five sites were embedded in parent institutions that pre-dated YouthBuild. Nevertheless, each of the YouthBuild programs was a new entity. The executive director had to learn a lot and do a lot in a hurry. Supported by the program manager, and given at most a few months to get the program up and running, the executive directors were responsible for a long list of important functions. They included:

- establishing and managing financial and administrative systems;
- recruiting and training (or arranging for training of) staff;
- supervising the planning of instructional components;
- leading the staff to become a team;
- interpreting the YouthBuild model to staff, board and trainees, and monitoring ongoing compliance with the model;
- articulating a vision for the local organization;
- overseeing recruitment and selection of participants;
- developing trust and credibility as a leader with young people;
- seeking, evaluating and retaining external assistance;
- managing ongoing external relations;
- managing crises of all varieties;
- applying creative problem-solving skills in addressing the items listed above, and more.

Time and again during the period of this study, it was clear that the quality of leadership is the single factor upon which the success of demonstration sites depended most. Each demonstration site had experiences that underscored this point, where important successes and failures were directly attributable to the job performance of the director and the program manager. Even though each site experienced turnover in the position of director, program manager or both, each (with the exception of Tallahassee) usually maintained a leadership team that was capable of performing the core management and leadership functions listed above. People needed to come into their jobs already strong; there was not time to grow. The mistake in Tallahassee was expecting that people who seemed initially under-qualified would grow rapidly into the job of director. They did not.

Fidelity to the YouthBuild Model

All of the Sites in the YouthBuild Demonstration operated in ways that were generally consistent with the basic YouthBuild model. Specifically, all taught basic skills and GED preparation and provided at least rudimentary training in construction skills. Each provided counseling and each put at least a little emphasis on leadership and community service. Hence, trainees at all of the sites knew how to recite that, "Leadership means taking responsibility for making things go right," for one's self, one's family, the program and the community. In addition, both staff and trainees at all of the sites knew that a special feature of YouthBuild is the emphasis on profound respect for youth. While YouthBuild USA provided training and advice for directors and staff and periodic leadership development sessions for trainees, each site was ultimately responsible for deciding how to implement each of the components. Problems with fidelity to the YouthBuild model did not entail outright rejection of a component or quality. Instead, when problems occurred, they entailed laxity or incompetence in implementation.

Most of YouthBuild USA's advice and assistance was uncontroversial, if not always valued. The exception was its approach to addressing the program quality called "profound respect for youth." Some staff members at each of the sites resented the word "adultism." Adultism, according to YouthBuild USA, comprises standard adult perspectives and behaviors that connote the superiority of adult perspectives and judgments. Participants felt empowered by discussions of adultism at training sessions that YouthBuild USA conducted for program participants. They sometimes accused staff members of adultism. Staff members complained (to us but reportedly not to YouthBuild USA) that YouthBuild USA's rhetoric about adultism was undermining their authority.

Overall, even though the attention that YouthBuild USA paid to adultism caused discomfort, it did raise consciousness. It almost surely increased respect for youth. Chapter 9 gives examples of the ways that respect for youth, or sometimes the absence of it, made a difference for youth engaging youth toward their own development.

The theme of respect for youth is also important for understanding the ways that sites handled the Youth Policy Committee (YPC). A general belief existed among some staff members at each site that youth lacked the knowledge and quality of judgment to participate usefully in program governance. Doubts such as these seemed at least partially responsible for the sporadic nature of efforts to use the Youth Policy Committee (YPC) as a setting for serious deliberation about important program decisions. Indeed, two directors suggested that the YPC might even be harmful as an aspect of work-readiness preparation because, they argued, no parallel exists in the real world of work. Hence, they argued, taking the YPC too seriously could be misleading to YouthBuild participants who would be likely in their future experiences on real jobs to find that no one would care to seek their opinions.

While these tensions were real, and while the quality of implementation varied both within and across sites and over time, demonstration sites did generally attempt to comply with the model's major components and qualities, including respect for youth. Moreover, YouthBuild USA learned from the tensions and steadily improved its approach to staff support and training in order to achieve even greater compliance.

Finally, some sites added modest variations that did not threaten the model's basic integrity. These included such things such as starting each morning with recitation of a motto in Boston and, at least for a while, requiring participants to do community service in San Francisco. Also, several other innovations, including vocational training in fields other than construction, were under consideration; Boston in 1992-93 arranged for a small group of trainees to receive training in environmental services, including insulation, conservation, and restorative services.

Record Keeping

The YouthBuild demonstration sites had a mosaic of funding sources and fiscal management practices. The mosaic was so complicated that we were not able to document reliably the true cost of each program. Data on revenues and expenses were incomplete and the quality of available data was questionable. Our best estimate is that the cost was in the range of $15,000 to $18,000 per enrollee. Sources of ambiguity in the data include: inconsistent documentation of in-kind contributions; different fiscal cycles for different sources of funding; inadequate documentation to distinguish expenses of the parent organization from those of YouthBuild; creative bookkeeping to get around restrictions on particular lines of categorical funding; and other problems of accounting and basic record keeping.

Access to Flexible Funding and Community Support

Sometimes creative record keeping seems necessary because flexible funding is often in short supply. Demonstration sites were forced to blend money from multiple sources. Much of this money carried restrictions on allowable uses. Hence, some components of the YouthBuild model (e.g., counseling and sometimes construction materials) were difficult to fund. Similarly, it was difficult to raise money earmarked for staff training and for other program infrastructure.

Flexibility is an important management resource. Without it, and if all funders' rules are followed, aspects of the core program model may be neglected and the program may become a very distorted version of the ideal. In order to replicate YouthBuild most successfully in the future, flexible funding is key. Sites in the demonstration that had more flexible sources of funding stayed closer to ideal modes of implementation and tended to experience more success.

Flexible funding is easier to find if the program has community support. Community support is complicated. Official literature describing the YouthBuild program focused on building relationships with the nearby community, seeking legitimacy for the model as an approach to youth development and obtaining favorable reactions from local funders. This turns out to be a narrow conception of what community support entails. It became clear that community support should be conceived more broadly. Stakeholders include, for example, representatives from other youth development agencies, public education, neighborhood development organizations (including community development corporations), private for-profit corporations, philanthropists and representatives from the unionized construction sector. Programs also seek the blessing of key politicians, including the mayor and relevant members of the city council. Finally, since some participants need to be referred for external services, such as drug rehabilitation, community support includes links with the institutions that provide such services, sometimes *pro bono*.

Each demonstration program started with what appeared to be a lot of community support. In some cases it was lasting and deep. In other cases it was superficial. For example, Boston was the most outstanding example of dependable support. With assistance from a number of allies, the executive director built support skillfully and continually, pursuing depth and breadth. In contrast, San Francisco had support that appeared to be strong and deep during the first year of the demonstration. Then, factors that we never completely understood, but that seemed to include the executive director's personal style, operated to undermine backing from local funders. As a result, a shortage of funds in the second half of the second cycle lead the site to shut down for about one month. The site did resume operation to complete the cycle. Even so, former supporters watched as the program died once the cycle ended.

What appeared initially to be strong support for the program in Tallahassee turned out to be superficial. Indeed, Tallahassee does not have a history of strong support for non-profit or community-based organizations. YouthBuild did not change the pattern. A succession of rather ineffective executive directors helped to seal this fate. The salary for the position was under $25,000. This hurt the organization's ability to attract talent. The executive director of the parent organization earned a low salary and his salary seemed to impose a ceiling for YouthBuild. Hence, YouthBuild Tallahassee remained a weak organization with little of the leadership talent or external support that would have been required to make it stronger.

Community support in Gary and Cleveland was mixed -- strong enough for some purposes but not for others. Gary experienced deteriorating relationships with the local construction unions and with the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) agency upon which it depended for much of its funding. The politics of the situation led to difficulty securing approval for a construction site for the second year of the demonstration; trainees in Gary's second cycle never had a real construction site. Still, Gary's program survived and continues to operate even today.

Cleveland's program died. The United Labor Agency (ULA), a union organization, was the host organization in Cleveland. While the agency voiced strong support for the program, the culture of the organization was disrespectful of youth, administratively rigid and run from the top down. This was never a good match for the participatory and respectful culture to which the YouthBuild program aspires. In addition, the refusal of the ULA to give the director of YouthBuild hiring and firing power effectively prevented him from assembling the ideal staff. Under these circumstances, the director considered splitting away from the ULA to begin a separate YouthBuild program. Instead, he accepted a job at YouthBuild USA to help other sites to implement the vision that he had embraced but not been permitted to implement at the ULA.

Technical Assistance and Training

The first year of the demonstration program was the first year that YouthBuild USA provided technical assistance. They were learning on the job. While they sometimes complained about it, all of the demonstration sites used the technical assistance and training that YouthBuild USA provided. Help took several forms. YouthBuild USA stayed in touch weekly by telephone with program directors, providing an ever-present sounding board for whatever directors wanted to talk about. Training sessions convened groups of directors and staff members from across all of the demonstration sites. These involved instruction by consultants and staff from YouthBuild USA as well as opportunities to share and learn from peers. YouthBuild USA developed new instructional materials in response to the needs that staff members who attended the sessions expressed.

Throughout both cycles of the demonstration, directors remarked sometimes that the technical assistance was not as sophisticated as they might like. Over time, however, the capacity of YouthBuild USA to provide technical assistance grew substantially. Recent evaluations that we have seen from participants at YouthBuild training sessions give quite high ratings. Most of the improvement has came as a consequence of lessons that YouthBuild USA learned during the demonstration project.

Two crises during the demonstration were especially important. In each case, YouthBuild USA was active, but not aggressive in responding. In one case, as indicated above, YouthBuild San Francisco ran out of money late in the second cycle of the program. In the other case, YouthBuild USA had to install a temporary stand-in when the director at Tallahassee, who, in our judgment was vastly under-qualified, was unable to handle the job. In a less acute case, YouthBuild USA temporarily supplied a counselor from its staff to fill a vacancy in Boston. It appeared generally that local boards of directors were engaged, but not especially effective in addressing crises.

Up-Front Planning

Several months of careful planning before a cycle begins can make a critical difference to the quality of the program. Sites differed both in the lead time that they had before trainees first arrived, and in the care that they took to plan during whatever time that they had. The matters that deserve attention during the period before the program begins are many. The most critical involve recruiting, screening and hiring staff. Once staff are hired, they need their own planning time to become familiar with the YouthBuild model and to develop curricula. In addition, the construction manager needs time to find appropriate projects and to negotiate the associated contracts. Of course, trainees have to be recruited, screened and selected, as well. Boston's planning process lasted several months and was clearly the most complete. Tallahassee's was very short and flawed.

To summarize, all of the sub-headings in the past few pages -- effective leadership, fidelity to the YouthBuild model, careful record keeping, access to flexible funding, community support, use of technical assistance and training, and up-front planning -- concern issues that distinguish more effective from less effective YouthBuild sites. No doubt, they will also distinguish sites in the future. The next section reviews key conclusions regarding the construction training component of the demonstration programs.

CONSTRUCTION TRAINING

YouthBuild USA places a major emphasis on the fact that YouthBuild aims to produce housing that people need, and thereby to play a role in the physical redevelopment of neighborhoods. In addition, while job readiness is the most critical aspiration of the job training that participants receive, skills for participation in the construction industry are the focus of that training. Hence, chapter 4 of this study is specifically an assessment of the construction training component of the program. As with the entire report, the intent of the chapter is to report on the demonstration sites and, more importantly, to provide insights that have value for the future.

Goals and Project Requirements

The target level of proficiency for the construction training component of the YouthBuild Demonstration was initially ambiguous. In our effort to classify what we observed, we conceived three prototypes: Model I, Model II and Model III. Model I produces "job ready" laborers. Model II produces "semi-skilled construction workers" and Model III produces workers with the classroom training and skills in construction required for entry into apprenticeship. Each of the three models is defined by features of content and process that are discernable to the knowledgeable observer.

Generally, construction training during the YouthBuild Demonstration achieved Model I. Boston strived most consistently toward elements of Models II and III. Cleveland presented itself as offering a Model III program, but the design as well as its implementation showed that only a very small number of students could achieve Model III results, and fewer, in fact, did. San Francisco tried to achieve Model II and Model III results but, except for a few individual exceptions, the program remained Model I in its principle results. Gary's efforts to go beyond Model I were frustrated by its inability to select an appropriate mix of trainees (i.e., in the second year trainees were very young) and to secure the right kinds of projects. While surpassing Model I in the YouthBuild program is surely feasible, sites during the demonstration did not consistently do so.

Construction Staff Capacity

In staffing YouthBuild, the tendency was to select people with experience in education, youth programs, social services and vocational education. Vocational education teachers were especially important as instructors for the construction training, along with the journeymen workers who sites retained as site supervisors. While all of the sites had people qualified to teach construction skills, only Boston and Gary had staff with significant background in construction project management.

In a typical community development corporation (CDC), the person responsible for project management identifies projects, does the project development work, assembles a team of workers and sub-contractors, identifies financial resources, manages construction and other development team members and nurtures ongoing relationships with sponsors and local officials. This is a substantial set of responsibilities and even the smallest development project is in jeopardy without competence in performing the entire set.

The difficulty that YouthBuild demonstration programs had in finding good projects and managing their multiple facets is due in large measure to the lack of staff with appropriate experience. Budgets were unrealistically tight; time tables did not take into account YouthBuild training features; and contracts were sometimes negotiated in ways that gave YouthBuild the raw end of the deal. Being apart from the CDC community, YouthBuild sites lacked access to soft money and capital for which CDCs sometimes qualify when they face similar problems.[146]

At least three alternatives exist by which YouthBuild could deal more successfully with this problem in the future. The first is to joint venture with CDCs and have the project management capability of the CDC serve the YouthBuild project. While Gary had problems, they at least had the resources of capable staff in project management because they operated in a CDC that produced housing.

---

[146] YouthBuild USA now has a fund supported by the Ford Foundation that allows it to provide this type of soft money to sites.

Another option is to hire part-time staff or a consultant (a "clerk of the works") to handle these responsibilities. This is an extra cost, but perhaps worth it. Finally, sites might consider teaching the construction manager and executive director how to perform some of these tasks. If they are not already knowledgeable, this is probably the least appropriate option.

The next section reviews what we learned about youth development at the demonstration sites, and the implications for program practices.

THE PROCESS OF YOUTH TRANSFORMATION

Some participants in YouthBuild do quite well. Others fail. Some things that YouthBuild directors, teachers and counselors do are wise. Others are ill-advised. In order to inform a future where more participants might succeed and more directors, teachers and counselors might act wisely, we sought to understand the processes by which participants and staff together produced the types of outcomes that the evaluation observed and measured (see below) for YouthBuild participants.

The project needed a framework in order to frame what we were learning about the process of youth development in YouthBuild. After searching through literature for an approach, we crafted a framework that adapts ideas that Erik Erikson used to understand identity over the human life cycle. We call our framework the Ferguson/Snipes (FS) model to distinguish it from Erikson's. Using Erikson's categories, the FS model highlights the tasks and associated stages through which youth develop in YouthBuild. Chapter 9 uses the model and material sampled from over 200 tape-recorded, transcribed and coded interviews that we conducted with participants and staff members, to illustrate processes that characterize the YouthBuild experience.

The FS framework highlights five tasks, each of which is ever-present but most salient during an associated stage that has the same name. In each stage, the participant learns things and develops relationships that he uses in the later stages. The first two stages, "trust versus mistrust" and "autonomy versus shame and doubt," are concerned primarily with what we call "social engagement." The trainee is getting to know the people, testing the rules and only sometimes focusing on personal growth. The other three stages, "initiative versus guilt," "industry versus inferiority" and "identity versus identity confusion," are, if they go well, a period of what we call "developmental engagement." If early social engagement does not produce reliable relationships, the trainee is unlikely to become engaged in more developmental ways and, therefore, unlikely to achieve much personal growth.

The next few pages summarize some of the more salient lessons associated with each of the five tasks and associated stages. (See figure 9.2 as a convenient summary of the framework.)

Trust Versus Mistrust

Overcoming feelings of mistrust or discomfort is the most salient task that trainees face during the first few weeks. Trainees who are too mistrustful or uncomfortable will leave the program or they will stay for awhile but remain detached, possibly with poor attendance. At first, issues of trust are on the level of feelings, not fully reasoned. Gradually, they become more explicitly the object of reason and the task becomes to learn **to trust in the caring, competence, resourcefulness and fairness of YouthBuild staff and in**

the physical and emotional safety of the program environment among peers. Important patterns and lessons for this stage include the following:

- Participants often arrive in fear. One fear is that violent rivalries from the street will filter into the program. Another is that if they reveal deficits in basic reading and math skills, they will be subject to ridicule from other trainees. Finally, whites, who were typically the racial minority during the demonstration, feared that they would be subject to racially motivated harassment.

  A well run orientation program during the first week or two of the program gives trainees ample opportunity to interact closely and thereby to establish common ground. It goes a long way toward making trainees comfortable in the program and willing to give the staff and one another the benefit of the doubt on issues of trust.

- By and large, and not surprisingly, YouthBuild participants have negative recollections of school. It is important for participants to see evidence early that, unlike their recollections of school, YouthBuild staff care, expect them to achieve their goals and will assist in the process.

- Trust builds rapidly when members of the staff go above and beyond their formal responsibilities to help participants in the early weeks of the program. Knowing that staff are prepared to do almost anything that seems required to help trainees get a smooth start in the program, including solving personal problems (e.g., organizing a funeral or finding housing), fosters a sense of security and an atmosphere akin to "family" among the trainees and staff.

  Conversely, signs of indifference, disdain or an overly punitive program culture can undermine feelings of trust and security.

During the first few weeks of the program, when the task is "trust versus mistrust," trainees are typically on their best behaviors. However, once they begin feeling more comfortable, their behaviors often deteriorate, and the most salient task becomes the following.

Autonomy Versus Shame and Doubt

The task for "autonomy versus shame and doubt" is to **negotiate an acceptable range of autonomy in behavior and decision making, learning to respect the program's**

rules and to value guidance. Trainees at this stage test the program. It is as though they seek to learn whether it is a worthy vehicle. The precise manner in which a participant might test a member of the staff depends on the participant's level of maturity. Some testing is confrontational, other testing is more subtle, as when participants ask questions merely to learn if staff members know the answers. Shame or doubt may be the result when testing produces bad outcomes, such as harsh punishment or social rejection. Important things to know about this period of the YouthBuild experience include the following.

- Staff members in Boston say that this period lasts into the fourth or fifth month;

- When trainees begin to test members of the staff, staff need to respond in ways that strike a delicate balance. Being too firm and punitive lead trainees to conclude that the staff are on a "power trip." Being too meek makes one a candidate for continuing harassment. Asked why they harassed a particular staff member, trainees responded, "Because we can."

- Before they relinquish a share of their autonomy, trainees seem to want answers to what we call the four trust questions. The answers need to be yes. The questions are: Do these people care about me? Are these people competent? Are they dependable? Will they treat me right -- with respect and fairness? Trainees will not give over control to people who seem uncaring, incompetent, undependable or disrespectful and unfair.

  Trainees will be on good behavior with some staff members but not with others. Reasons include differences in the answers to the four trust questions.

- Trainees who come more recently from "the streets" seem to have a harder time adjusting to the rules and requirements of the program. Some of these problems appear to result from social routines (e.g., suspicion, bravado, reluctance to self disclose) that are survival skills on the street but impediments in YouthBuild.

- Trainees who come directly from "the streets" often say that only counselors who have "been there" can help them to think through problems that involve street-level affairs. Hence, it helps to have at least one person on the staff, ideally a counselor, who has such experience.

- The Youth Policy Committee (YPC) often plays an important role in the successful resolution of this stage. In particular, the YPC can be an effective instrument through which to negotiate questions of autonomy, including bringing programs back in line when discipline seriously deteriorates, often around the third month. The YPC can also help to facilitate resolution of disputes between trainees and staff. (Of course, ideally, this is only a small part of the YPC's role.)

Toward the middle months of the program, this period ends. As one program manager phrased it, trainees cease trying so much to "get over" and start trying more often to "get ahead."

Initiative Versus Guilt

Once trainees reach sufficient resolution on issues of trust and autonomy they are ready to become more serious in deciding what they want from the program. Hence, they **initiate an honest attempt to collaborate with staff and peers toward self development, learning to cope with or to overcome any survivor's guilt and feelings of rejection by, or isolation from, the old peer group.** This is the time that trainees refine their goals and deal with any feelings of ambivalence regarding whether, by adopting higher aspirations, they are selling out or abandoning their friends and family.

- The biggest threat to the successful resolution of this stage may come from feelings of guilt. Choices may seem to require that the youth choose the friends and values that gave life structure and legitimacy before YouthBuild versus the friends and values that might through YouthBuild lead to success in mainstream society.

- Typically, these issues are much more problematic for youth who have been more heavily involved with the streets, as they tend to have social supports that do not fit well with mainstream society.

- In order to successfully deal with these issues, trainees need ways to interpret their previous lifestyles, relationships and values in terms that free them to continue making progress toward conventional success without feeling guilty.

  Explicit discussions of morality can be helpful. The best YouthBuild counselors help participants to find conventional goals that have moral legitimacy and to find moral legitimacy in conventional goals.

- Resolution is sometimes delayed when the trainees' peers outside of YouthBuild say things that reinforce the perception that the participant is betraying them by trying to succeed in mainstream society. Females seem to experience more such disapproval than males.

- The leadership development component of YouthBuild is important here. It emphasizes "taking responsibility for making things go right" for one's self, family, in the program and in the community. The idea that success in mainstream society empowers people to help their families and communities is important in helping trainees to resolve their feelings of guilt and ambivalence.

Industry Versus Inferiority

Having selected goals and overcome most guilt about the morality of pursuing them, the most salient task becomes to strive industriously toward achieving them. Hence the task "industry versus inferiority" involves the pursuit of mastery. Youth **begin working industriously to learn and integrate skills, steadily building belief in their capacity for mastery**. Staff notice that trainees respond with more urgency, interest and excitement than during earlier months. Now, when they ask questions, they really want the answers.

In order for a trainee to engage deeply toward mastery of the skills and strategies necessary for a particular goal, such as passing the GED, the trainee must believe that the goal is both attractive and feasible. In order for a goal to be feasible for youth who have deep deficits in necessary skills and knowledge, staff need to be available and responsive. Some staff tend to be only selectively responsive. Trainees notice when a staff member has implicitly written off a class member, signaling that the class member is hopeless. Sometimes trainees try to stop the class member from disengaging. Feelings of inferiority and lack of control with which many students enter the program undermine their belief that their goals are attainable. However, encouragement from staff, individualized attention and experiences of success can go a long way toward counteracting these effects.

The following bullets, all pertaining to "industry versus inferiority," are organized within the four major components of the YouthBuild model: the basic skills classroom, construction training, counseling and leadership development.

Industry and the Classroom

- Students who say they were never industrious in school become industrious when they have teachers in YouthBuild who are patient with them when they have difficulty. Conversely, when teachers appear to lack patience it reinforces participants' feelings of inferiority and their industriousness wanes because success then seems infeasible.

- When the teacher is patient with everyone, the message is that *everyone* can do it. This fosters team spirit and bolsters peer support.

- Sites produced more GEDs when the staff and the trainees were single-minded about doing so. Often teachers had agendas that were more general than GED preparation. Their classes often received high marks from trainees, but they were not preoccupied with producing GEDs. These classes tended to produce fewer GEDs.

- Industriousness toward the GED is threatened when long periods pass with no explicit evidence that participants are nearing the time that they can take and pass the GED exam. Evidence that success is potentially feasible comes from success on practice exams or when some trainees take and pass the exam.

Industry and Construction

- Some instructors in construction training tend to neglect all female trainees and male trainees who have the least experience with using tools. This is an impediment for such youth to achieving industry in the construction component of the program.

- Some participants find opportunities to use their skills for work on the weekends. This sometimes motivates others to work industriously toward mastery so that they can find similar opportunities.

- At this stage, youth test their new skills in settings outside of the program. When they succeed, such experiences, can have powerful impacts on participants' belief in their competence and potential for mastery.

  However, young people often need support in order to complete successfully the projects that they begin. Staff should be fully prepared to respond periodically to give advice, and sometimes actual assistance, on jobs that participants have botched outside of the program. To maintain the student's sense of industry, instructors should take such opportunities to provide encouragement of the type that counteracts feelings of discouragement and inferiority.

- A major impediment to industriousness in the construction component during the demonstration was the difficulty that some sites experienced finding appropriate construction projects. The longer demolition and clean-up projects extended into the program year, the less time was available for students to learn and practice construction skills, and the more discouraged some students became.

- Some instructors promised that the best jobs would go to the trainees who worked hardest and achieved the most mastery. This appeared to be a very effective incentive for the most ambitious trainees interested in careers in construction, but it appeared to make little difference to others.

Industry and Leadership

- As with the other components, the same elements of patience, encouragement and opportunities to practice skills and experience success are key elements that support trainees' development of confidence as leaders.

- Participation in efforts to lobby Congress for funding provided a number of trainees with opportunities to develop confidence in their ability to speak in public and to be effective in civic affairs. Such opportunities are an important part of the successful resolution of industry in the leadership domain.

- However, typically, aside from a heavy emphasis on personal responsibility, staff and directors did not treat the leadership component of the program as seriously as the other components. As a result, youth leadership activities were not nurtured and developed to the degree that would produce widespread and sustained engagement in developing specific leadership skills.

- Despite the failure of many among the staff to take the Youth Policy Committee (YPC) seriously as an instructional setting, it is clear that the YPC or some alternative way of giving students a collective voice is an absolutely indispensable part of the program. YouthBuild would be a fundamentally different program without it. Nevertheless, it appeared that no more than a few students at each site reached the stage of industry in their work on the YPC.

Industry and Counseling

- Counselors affect every aspect of the program by solving problems that allow students to continue functioning in the program. When youth experience that the counselors are caring, insightful, responsive and confidential, they will use them. However, when counseling functions are performed poorly, fewer youth engage the counselors industriously to work through personal problems.

Identity Versus Identity Confusion

"Identity versus identity confusion" is the fifth and final task that we consider. It entails resolving inconsistencies and tensions between old and new beliefs about one's self. The task is to **assimilate an internally consistent and positive identity that fosters a healthy life style, internal satisfaction with one's self and a sense of positive expectancy about one's future.**

As participants have experiences in the program that induce feelings and behaviors that are different from those of the past, they begin to reevaluate who they are, both inside and in the eyes of others. Asked to say who they were then (before YouthBuild) and who they are now (at the end of the program), students quoted near the end of chapter 9 report moving from feelings of inferiority, resignation, shame and guilt to perceptions of themselves as effective, successful, respectful, morally upright citizens contributing to the well being of their communities.[147]

Most of the issues that the last few pages highlight are things that many staff members at YouthBuild programs have experienced or know intuitively. Still, the synthesis that this study provides can help them to draw upon that knowledge more systematically and use it more consistently. Explicit attention to the fact that the tasks and stages occur in a natural and logical sequence can help staff to anticipate and to address the associated challenges. Similarly, if staff use this material to make participants more systematically aware of what they will be experiencing, they will be better prepared to avoid the downsides of doubt, guilt, inferiority and identity confusion that come with failure to resolve the tensions that each respective stage presents.

---

[147] The stability of such changes will depend on how consistently the trainee finds support in the external environment after YouthBuild, but this raises issues that are beyond the scope of the present report.

Statistical Findings on Engagement

The final bullet in the introduction to this chapter indicates that the best YouthBuild directors and staff are:

> more than concerned and friendly; [they are people] who, in addition to being likeable and emotionally supportive, are also steadfast in their insistence that youth should make the most of what YouthBuild has to offer. These are directors and staff who work steadily and competently to lead youth into **developmental engagement toward personal growth, and not merely social engagement for an enjoyable experience**.

The importance of developmental engagement shows up in both qualitative and quantitative analysis.

Chapters 6 and 7 use staff members' ratings of staff-youth relationships as measures of social engagement during the early months. For individual trainees, a higher rating for staff-youth relationships is clearly a positive -- those with higher relationship ratings do better on other dimensions. However, sites that have higher average ratings by staff for the quality of staff-youth relationships during the early months have lower ratings for "directors know what they're doing" (as rated by trainees) and lower positive termination rates. Our interpretation, based on what we know from site visits, is that sites with the higher ratings do not push trainees as hard to move from merely social into developmental engagement. Total happiness is not a uniform blessing. In a sense, staff and youth may be collaborating in work avoidance.

Statistical analysis in chapter 10 supplements the qualitative material in chapter 9 to provide more evidence that developmental engagement matters. Chapter 10 uses a set of measures from the end-of-program survey to construct separate measures for social and developmental engagement. The social engagement index uses five items that are associated primarily with social relations; the developmental engagement index uses five that are associated primarily with using relationships for purposes of personal development.

Chapter 10 establishes that changes from the base line in measures of time management and behavior are statistically associated with developmental engagement but not with social engagement. The same is true for completion of the GED. Our interpretation is that social engagement is necessary because developmental engagement relies on the relationships that social engagement fosters. However, social engagement alone is not sufficient.

Consistent with the idea that social engagement is a foundation for developmental engagement, correlations indicate that social engagement develops first. Social engagement measured at the end of the program is correlated significantly with the quality of staff-youth relationships from both early and late in the program cycle. However, the index for developmental engagement is correlated only with staff-youth relationships from late in the cycle; its correlation with the index from early in the cycle is small and statistically insignificant. It appears that developmental engagement materializes as an important dynamic in staff-youth relationships only later in the cycle. Hence, the interviews, the FS model and the statistical analyses suggest the same story: social engagement during the early months of the program is important as a foundation for what is to come.

To some degree, we can predict social engagement during the early months using data from the base line on life styles and attitudes (see chapter 6). Among the factors that we test as predictors of early relationship ratings, two clusters stand out. The most important concerns the trainee's perspective regarding the strategic importance of friendliness, honesty and respect for others. The second concerns his or her perspective regarding the efficacy of effort and knowledge as opposed to chance.[148] As expected, trainees who rate highest on the quality of their relationships with staff members are those who have the more conventional belief systems regarding these two clusters (indices). In contrast, the same beliefs do not predict absenteeism. Statistically, absenteeism is related primarily to life style (e.g., marijuana use and time hanging out) and not to the beliefs that predict relationships. (Absenteeism and relationships are, however, strongly correlated with one another; the two probably affect one another.)

---

[148] The items that attempt to measure the "strategic importance" of things ask respondents to rate how important each will be in determining how much money they will make in their lives.

If some youth are predisposed to believe that friendliness, honesty and respectfulness are only moderately important, that effort and knowledge are no more important than chance, and if they also use marijuana often and hangout much of the time in the months just before entering YouthBuild, then the job that staff face in helping them to become socially and then developmentally engaged in YouthBuild is truly an uphill battle. Often, young people with this profile should remain on their own for another year or two, until they are more "ready" for YouthBuild. Readiness is a theme in chapter 7.

PREDICTING PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

Chapter 7 of this report presents findings concerning predictors of positive termination and completion of the GED. The findings have implications for recruitment, screening and selection standards as well as for program accountability.

Chapter 7 emphasizes the importance of individuals' goals, strategy beliefs, skills and expected rewards in producing the forms of engagement that lead to positive termination and GED completion. The idea is that engagement in YouthBuild will be greater, the better the program fits with the *goals* that the participants have the more knowledge they have of *strategies* through which to pursue goals, the more *skills* they have with which to implement the strategies and the more *rewards* they expect from the effort.[149] The same holds for options outside of YouthBuild, some wholesome and some not, that may entail other goals, strategies, skills and rewards that compete with

---

[149] Effective rewards produce fulfillment along fundamental human motive dimensions such as the need to experience affiliation, influence, achievement and security.

YouthBuild. (Hence, some of the variables in the statistical analysis are proxies for competing reward structures.)

Some parts of the analysis include the "learning environment at the site" as another category of explanatory factors for positive terminations and GED completions. Measures in this category include each site-year's mean for items where participants rate their instructors on caring, competence and willingness to give individual instruction. Each site-year's average staff-youth relationship rating from the first few months of the cycle as an additional measure of the learning environment at the site. The learning environment at the site is a statistically significant category for predicting both positive terminations and GED completions.[150]

Base-line characteristics of participants included in the multivariate analysis for positive terminations and GED completions include:

Goals:

- the degree to which the trainee wants the GED and expects to earn it;
- the degree to which the trainee wants to learn construction skills;

Strategy Beliefs:

- the perceived importance of honesty, friendliness and respectfulness in determining life-time earnings;
- the perceived importance of effort and knowledge as opposed to chance in determining life-time earnings;

Basic Skills:

- the degree to which the trainee believes that his or her basic reading and math skills are good enough not to be impediments to finding legal employment;

Life Style and Alternative Reward Structures

---

[150] The teacher quality variables have impacts in the expected positive direction. The average staff-youth relationship rating from the early months of the program has a consistently negative estimated effect for both positive terminations and GED completions. As indicated earlier, a possible reason is that sites with high early relationship ratings may be too cozy, not strict enough about doing the real work of youth development. See chapters 6 and 7 for more on this point.

- expectations regarding whether legal jobs pay more, the same or less than illegal jobs;
- the expected degree of difficulty finding a job at $5/hour;
- the frequency of marijuana use in months just before YouthBuild;
- whether the trainee has a felony conviction;
- the frequency of hanging out -- hours per day, days per week, etc., in months just before YouthBuild; and
- the frequency of baby-sitting and of trying to set good examples for children.

Other variables in the analysis control for years of schooling, age, gender and race.

As chapter 7 discusses, the measures of life style are more important for predicting positive terminations, just as they were in chapter 6 for predicting absenteeism. On the other hand, the most important predictors of GED completion are goals, beliefs about the efficacy of knowledge and effort as opposed to chance, and the trainee's self assessment of the adequacy of his or her basic reading and math skills for finding employment. The measured differences among trainees appear to account for between one third and two thirds of the differences among site-years in rates of positive termination and GED completion. Though more difficult to measure, much of the remaining differences appears to be due to staff quality and implementation practices.

Chapter 8 produces simulations using the estimates generated for chapter 7.[151] Among other things, graphs in chapter 8 show what the rates of positive termination and GED completion might have been for the group of participants that attended each site-year, if instead the same group had attended the "flagship" or the "troubled" site-year. In effect, this simulates what the positive termination or the GED completion rate for the site would have been if it had operated with "flagship" standards or with "troubled" standards.

The result is that some site-years that had low absolute rates of positive termination or GED completion actually performed well, considering the characteristics of the trainees with whom they had to work. Conversely, some sites with relatively high rates should have done substantially better.

---

[151] An appendix to chapter 7 shows out-of-sample predictions for positive terminations, using the nine other sites-years to predict the positive termination rate for each site-year.

By showing what one should expect based on a given set of assumptions regarding the characteristics of trainees, analysis such as this has the potential to inform recruitment and screening criteria for trainees as well as performance targets and standards for accountability. At a minimum, the analysis shows the folly of making comparative inferences about the effectiveness of different sites, without taking into account the characteristics of trainees that might explain the observed differences.

No set of criteria for recruitment and selection is right or wrong. However, the types of estimates that chapters 7 and 8 present can be the basis for assessing some of the trade-offs regarding likely rates of positive terminations and GED completions associated with trainees who have particular profiles. Similarly, instead of holding all sites accountable for meeting uniform targets of performance, estimates such as these can ground accountability standards on the characteristics of trainees and the performance of comparable sites.

This is not, however, a panacea. The rich collection of variables that we find to be important are not typically available to policy analysts. Moreover, no one model, including ours, is unassailable in its ability to identify appropriate outcome levels against which to hold programs accountable. Hence, despite the growing popularity in policy circles of outcomes-based accountability, any serious regime of accountability for programs like YouthBuild will necessarily include site visits and give attention to issues of process as well as to outcomes. This study has attempted to do just that, in the context of a formative evaluation.

CONCLUSION

The YouthBuild model is a good fit for young people who need and are ready to receive what the YouthBuild program has to offer. When implemented well, as in Boston's second cycle during the demonstration, it offers most of what participants seem to need to launch themselves successfully into the adult world of work and responsibility, assuming that they do their part. When implemented poorly, as in Tallahassee, it gives youth a place to be when they have nowhere else to go, but it falls short of what YouthBuild is supposed to be and do.

The best results come when the program is implemented well, while serving a group of participants who need and desperately want what the program has to offer. Hopefully, the growing number of local organizations that currently participate with YouthBuild USA in the YouthBuild Network will continue to share lessons with one another and will push one another toward ever higher standards of service to the young people who need what a well-run YouthBuild program has to offer.

EPILOGUE

by Dorothy Stoneman

The authors of the Demonstration Report were kind enough to invite me to write an epilogue to this report. Following are my thoughts about their findings, an update on the YouthBuild initiative since 1993, and a brief description of what we see ahead.

REFLECTIONS ON THE DEMONSTRATION AND THE REPORT

The work of the researchers has been tremendously valuable for the YouthBuild movement. We are grateful not only to Phillip Clay, Ron Ferguson, P/PV and the staff who worked on this, but also to The Ford Foundation for conceiving of this demonstration, and The Ford Foundation, DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund, The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, and the Lilly Endowments for funding the demonstration.

First of all, the demonstration itself provided focus and accountability for both the program operators and YouthBuild USA as we embarked on the first cycle of replication.

Secondly, the researchers agreed to a demonstration that built in feedback to the field as we went along and included participation of both directors and youth in reflecting on what was being learned and how it could be useful. The importance of this increased as time went on, because the theoretical perspective emerging from Ron Ferguson's study of students' transformation process became an important resource for staff training. What we had understood intuitively, the demonstration documented and explained theoretically, giving greater depth to everyone's understanding.

To us, the most important aspect of the research was this careful look inside the "black box," giving real insight into how the YouthBuild process works for its participants. We could not have done this for ourselves; we had already written what we understood, but had never studied it systematically and objectively from the outside and didn't have the capacity to do it.

In our opinion, the biggest error of the demonstration was that it was not structured to develop YouthBuild USA's capacity to collect and analyze accurate data after the completion of the demonstration. Relying on an external evaluator to develop and implement the MIS system satisfied the requirement that there be an independent evaluation, but did not serve the long-term need for information and accountability in an expanding system. We would strongly recommend to funders that demonstrations that are done in partnership with a national organization build the internal capacity for future data collection and analysis.

The tendency in research demonstrations seems to be to treat the demonstration as a self-contained project that will end at the completion of the research. But we always intended that the demonstration was part of an effort to take YouthBuild to scale, as long as it continued to prove meritorious; so we should have insisted on a process of building data collection capacity within YouthBuild USA.

As we look at the conclusions and the data of the researchers, we agree with most of it. There are several points that we would underline and add to. They are simply, as follows:

The researchers concluded that YouthBuild is replicable and that it works best when it follows the philosophy and design put forth by YouthBuild USA.

They concluded, not surprisingly, that the single most important factor in success was the quality of the executive leadership.

What we would add is that the recruitment of high quality local leadership is enhanced by having a concept that is sufficiently comprehensive and ambitious to catch their imagination and tap into their commitment. We found that our plan to build a national movement, coupled with the comprehensive program design enabling directors to do something they truly believed would work, enhanced YouthBuild's ability to attract good local leadership. Nonetheless, we note a need for a national system of training for highly motivated but inexperienced executive leadership to meet the needs of community based nonprofit organizations.

The researchers noted during the study, but did not emphasize in the report, that local sites tended to achieve what they decided most strongly to achieve. The goals directors set for their programs tended to be reached. It was also true that the goals YouthBuild USA set and focused on, tended to be reached. To be specific, YouthBuild USA was focused on attendance and retention as the first two objectives; the result was 85% attendance and 67% retention. When YouthBuild Boston and YouthBuild San Francisco focused on obtaining GED's they succeeded. Focus and determination mattered.

The researchers noted that YouthBuild was working primarily with minority men, 65% of whom had prior dealings with the criminal justice system, and 33% of whom had been convicted and incarcerated for felonies. YouthBuild USA set out to succeed with minority men, and has done so to a considerable extent. The researchers didn't give much attention to why we succeeded in recruiting and holding African American men. We believe the following factors worked together to produce this result: construction work attracted men; programs were community based and located in African American communities; staff were predominantly Black or Latino/a; recruitment strategies made clear that past criminal records would not exclude applicants; school curricula gave attention to the culture and history of the students attending; the building of a positive peer group and respect for the intelligence and leadership potential of the young men meets a particular need to counteract the invalidations experienced by this group in the society at large. New YouthBuild programs since the demonstration are continuing to work well with minority men.

New sites are also, however, reaching minority women and low income white men and women in both urban and rural areas. The appeal of the design is not limited to minority men. We are continually impressed by the fact that the YouthBuild program design provides unemployed, undereducated young adults exactly the combination of opportunities they are seeking: a path back into reclaiming their education, skills training in a field with decent pay, a chance to produce something immediately visible that is valued by their neighbors, individual and group counseling from admired role models, a positive peer group with a value system that can compete with the lure of the street, money, and a vision of how they can build a life to be proud of that can make a difference to their families and communities. The right and the yearning to be productive, to be educated, to be a respected member of the community, and to be economically self-sufficient is what YouthBuild is designed to satisfy.

One important conclusion of the researchers was that outcome standards could not be mechanically applied to programs without taking into account precisely what group of students, with what characteristics, at what stage in their own development, had been accepted into the program. This is a critical observation that we hope will counterbalance the increasing emphasis on objective outcomes as the only measure of success.

Based on the research findings regarding the importance of "readiness" of applicants to make the most of the YouthBuild opportunity,[1] program operators could conceivably decide that it would increase the effectiveness of the program to select participants who had already given up street life several months prior to joining the program.

This was of concern to us, because we have always taken the position that motivation was the primary selection criterion, not particular behavioral or life style issues, and not reading level or a history of legal issues. (We have, however, advised programs to avoid accepting candidates who are addicted to drugs if it can be discerned.)

Puzzling over the practical implications of the findings, I asked a group of trainees at YouthBuild Seattle this month whether they thought we should screen out students who were not "ready" for YouthBuild. They responded, after considerable discussion, that even those students who failed to abandon street life during YouthBuild and didn't graduate would probably be importantly influenced in the long run by having experienced a completely positive and hopeful mini-community. Wilberto Rivera said, "The act of applying to YouthBuild represents the beginning of the decision to make the change. The person may not succeed for years, but he has to begin somewhere. Nobody should be turned away from YouthBuild; some people have never experienced a positive environment."

The researchers did not mention in the report that simultaneous with this demonstration, YouthBuild USA was also working with 7 other "replication sites" that did not participate formally in the demonstration but were included in all YouthBuild USA's staff trainings and in the provision of technical assistance. We had felt at the outset that 5 sites was too small a sample from which to draw broad conclusions; we expected to have something of a bell curve that could look like each site's circumstances were unique. Although we could only afford to include five in the formal demonstration, we worked to include others informally, so that we could generalize with greater confidence about replicability, possible levels of success, and common issues.

The two original New York City sites also went forward during this period, making a total of 14 in existence in 1993. We were not, however, collecting data through an independent evaluator for 9 of these 14. In 1993 YouthBuild USA itself collected and verified data at the end of the year for the two strongest of the "replication sites," and combined it with the two strongest demonstration sites. The results of taking the data for the 4 strongest sites (Boston, Philadelphia, Gary, and St. Louis) were as follows: 70.3% of the enrollees remained in the program with an average attendance of 85% for the entire cycle, which averaged 9.5 months, or were deliberately placed in an appropriate job early; 95.5% of this 70% went on to full-time post-secondary education or were placed in jobs averaging $7.08 per hour.

---

[1] Specifically, the research found that students who have less recent criminal involvement, less recent use of drugs, more concern for children and who show other signs of being ready to settle down into a life consistent with mainstream conventional norms, are more likely to finish the program successfully.

All 4 of these sites are still in operation, whereas only 2 of the 5 original demonstration sites are still in operation.

YOUTHBUILD LEGISLATION

At the same time that we were testing replicability with 14 sites, and developing YouthBuild USA as a national technical assistance provider, we were building the YouthBuild Coalition to advocate for federal YouthBuild funding.

By 1990, the YouthBuild Coalition had several hundred member organizations and had worked with Representative Major Owens of Brooklyn (NY) to develop the YouthBuild Act, which Mr. Owens introduced in Congress. In l991, Senator John Kerry introduced it in the Senate.

The YouthBuild Act was tacked onto the Housing and Community Development Act of l992, passed, and signed into law by President Bush in the fall of l992. It won an appropriation of $40 million to be managed by HUD. 808 groups applied for funding in the first round of competition run by HUD in the spring of 1994. HUD funded 31 implementation sites and 105 planning sites.

EXPANDING TO 100 SITES

By 1996, one hundred YouthBuild programs had been established in 34 states, ninety of them funded by HUD. Over 1700 applications had been received by HUD in three annual cycles of the YouthBuild competition. This is evidence not only of extraordinary interest in YouthBuild as a program well-designed to meet the needs of local communities, but also a surprising level of local capacity. HUD officials say that many, many more strong applications are received each year than they can fund.

In 1994, YouthBuild USA was selected by HUD through a competitive process to become the technical assistance provider for HUD-funded YouthBuild programs. In that role, YouthBuild USA now has a staff of over 45 who produce over 20 national training events a year for all levels of YouthBuild program staff, as well as provide on-site assistance for programs that request it, and develop national leadership trainings for youth leaders.

Anticipating the dangers of rapid expansion, and responding to the evaluators' call for more precision about what constitutes a *bona fide* YouthBuild program, YouthBuild USA and the original 14 sites developed a set of distinct program design and performance standards that directors and youth agreed represented best practices and appropriate outcomes for a genuine and successful YouthBuild program.

HUD rejected these program standards as being too prescriptive for its grantees, but had no objection to YouthBuild USA developing the YouthBuild USA Affiliated Network of programs voluntarily committed to a common philosophy and program standards. As of July, 1996, 59 groups had been accepted as provisional members by the YouthBuild USA membership committee. To become full members, each program must pass through a rigorous program audit demonstrating that it meets the program standards.

As a result of our different roles, there is a fascinating interplay between HUD, YouthBuild USA, and the field.

HUD selects the grantees, with no input from Youthbuild USA, on a competitive basis. The HUD YouthBuild program is administered by just 2 people at HUD who have shown enormous dedication and flexibility and impose virtually no red tape. Their primary functions are the development of guidelines for proposal submission; the organization of the selection process in an annual competition; the supervision of YouthBuild USA's technical assistance; receiving reports, and occasional crisis response.

YouthBuild USA provides national trainings and handbooks for all grantees, and on-site technical assistance to those grantees who request it and are approved to receive technical assistance by HUD. YouthBuild USA staff are careful not to be prescriptive or to act as a monitor in relation to program standards not accepted by HUD. Meanwhile, the sub-set of HUD grantees who are members of the YouthBuild USA Affiliated Network have agreed to much tighter centralized design and quality control than HUD requires.

Independent of HUD, The DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, The Irvine Foundation, and the Lilly Endowment have all continued to support the important evolution of the YouthBuild USA Affiliated Network: the democratic structures of accountability it provides, the additional technical assistance beyond what HUD will approve for affiliated sites, and the national network of youth leaders emerging from the local sites.

Because the research herein described did not develop YouthBuild USA's capacity to run a Management Information System for local sites, and since HUD's general counsel judged that the legislation did not authorize use of funds for data collection and analysis, the same private foundations that funded this research, plus others, have funded YouthBuild USA to develop a YouthBuild Management Information System, which is now in operation.

The Affiliated Network has also received systematic support from The Corporation for National Service, which funded YouthBuild USA to regrant funds and scholarships to local YouthBuild affiliated sites. An additional sub-set of 32 YouthBuild sites thereby had become YouthBuild AmeriCorps programs in 1996, awarding scholarships for post-secondary education worth $2300 to each of its graduates and developing an expanded emphasis on additional types of community service for program members.

What may turn out to be as important to study in the coming period as the evolution of the local programs' capacity to produce positive results is the capacity of the national network to remain united, vigorous, creative, committed to voluntary accountability, and able to attract talented local leaders. The YouthBuild USA Affiliated Network is an interesting phenomenon in itself, operating independent of the funders of the local sites.

In actual implementation, the 100 sites operating in I996 range greatly in quality. But what has been amazing to observe has been the extraordinary enthusiasm about the program design and philosophy generated among staff and youth alike in virtually all locations, even those that have significant problems.

The transformation process documented by Ron Ferguson and Jason Snipes appears to be taking place in most of the new YouthBuild programs. Trainees are brought together from all sites by YouthBuild USA in large national conferences twice a year, and the testimonials from youth, the similarity of what they say regardless of their geographic location or ethnic background, are striking.

Average statistical data on outcomes for the 100 programs does not yet exist. However, many new sites have demonstrated an ability to build on what has been learned to produce continually better outcomes. YouthBuild USA has tried to publicize among the sites the highest level of performance to demonstrate what is possible, and to pull all sites in that direction. The limits are still unclear, the network is still in development, momentum is still positive. It continues to be true that staff tend to produce what they decide to produce. According to their own reports, strong sites are obtaining above 85% attendance, and most sites say they are holding 60-70% of their enrollees for the full 10 to 12 month cycle. In I996, self-reported data from a cross section of 10 sites again show 66% of enrollees completing the program, and 80% of these being placed in jobs averaging $7.09/hour. It shows two of these sites (Philadelphia and Pittsburgh) placing over 50% of their graduates in postsecondary education, as an indication of what can happen when staff decide to focus on continuing education.

Of perhaps greatest significance, a very talented group of directors has been attracted to the comprehensiveness of the YouthBuild program. YouthBuild USA brings the directors together 4 times a year for conferences which are all characterized by tremendous mutual respect and excitement in being together. This is a key part of building national capacity.

Unfortunately, not all the directors succeed. Since I991 there have been 16 directors fired from local sites by their executive directors or Boards of Directors, and each of these instances has been fraught with difficulty for the local site. Many of these directors were very dedicated to the YouthBuild program, but were either unable to fulfill the complex set of tasks adequately or were unable to negotiate the politics of their own organizations.

Of these 16 fired directors, 15 were men, equally divided between black and white. YouthBuild USA is still puzzling over the dynamics that are causing a disproportionate number of male directors to be fired. We are speculating that YouthBuild requires a particular set of skills related to nurturing, collaborating, negotiating, building teams and consensus, managing conflict, being able to lead while being willing to be subordinate to a board of directors and empowering youth to participate in decisionmaking, which men may be less conditioned to use than are women. There are, of course, outstanding male leaders of local YouthBuild sites doing a fine job with the support of their boards of directors; we're just wondering why so many of the fired directors have been male, generally fired by other males. One interesting interpretation of the firings is that the decentralized system is managing to care enough about quality to eject at the local level the directors who are not succeeding well enough to match the hope generated by the YouthBuild concept.

FUTURE OBSTACLES AND DIRECTIONS

The tragedy of 1996 is that only 29 sites will be funded by HUD, due to the budget cuts imposed by the 104th Congress. Although YouthBuild survived as a line item in the HUD budget, against all predictions at the start of 1995, the cut was still enormous. In 1997 the funding for YouthBuild will be restored to at least $30 million; and for 1998 HUD is recommending a substantial expansion.

Many of the 100 sites will survive in a diminished form during 1996-97, having obtained public school funding or significant other local support. Both the national JTPA and School-to-Work leadership have recommended to local administrators that they seek out good YouthBuild programs to fund. Many sites will work to obtain state level funding through State YouthBuild coalitions organized by YouthBuild USA during 1996. The stress of survival, however, is likely to distract the most talented leadership from focusing on program quality, and is likely to produce stress that results in internal program weakness or conflict. It is a shame to pull attention away from results and toward survival at this very ripe moment in the YouthBuild movement's history. We do expect, however, that it will be a temporary setback, and that YouthBuild will burst forth before long in an expanded initiative that can grab the imagination of the nation and the hearts of the youth, producing an exciting and visible approach to diminishing despair and rebuilding community in low income neighborhoods.

For an expanded initiative to work, YouthBuild USA will have to continue finding ways of more effectively training staff and directors, intervening in crises, solving local problems, developing curricula, managing increasing quantities of information, and keeping graduates on track.

IN CLOSING

Young people in every local and national gathering tell us in no uncertain terms that we should fight for increased government investment in YouthBuild, and that its existence should be widely publicized. In the words of Serena Hillman, student at YouthBuild Seattle, "YouthBuild not only gives us a second chance, which we desperately need, but it gives society a chance... to realize that people can change. Society needs that."